

# ROMSEY OUTLINE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Adopted ODP

25 November 2009

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# 1. Executive Summary

Romsey is located within the Macedon Ranges Shire, approximately 63km north-west of the Melbourne CBD. The township forms the main urban centre in the east of the municipality and is located on the Melbourne–Lancefield Road.

The Romsey township has strong links to Sunbury and Melbourne and is experiencing increased growth and development pressure. This is primarily due to the town's proximity to Melbourne and attractiveness to retirees and rural 'lifestyle' commuters.

The Romsey Outline Development Plan (ODP) aims to provide a detailed plan for the future residential, commercial and industrial growth of Romsey, with planning horizons to 2021 and 2031.

The ODP process has now been completed and this report describes the preparation of the plan and the reasons behind key decisions in detail.

This report has two parts.

- **Section 1** provides a strategic background for the subsequent development of the ODP, which occurs in Section 2 of the report. It includes an assessment of existing conditions, servicing issues, land zonings and current planning policy. Extensive community consultation (detailed in the appendices) has informed the process. A detailed assessment of land supply and demand for residential, commercial and industrial purposes is provided. Key subdivision design principles are also detailed.
- **Section 2** takes this work and develops the vision statements for Romsey and the ODP, including a Structure Plan which will form the basis of an amendment to the Planning Scheme. The ODP aims to reflect the planning needs of Romsey and to combine these with the needs and aspirations of the local community and key stakeholders.

Key influences recognised in the plan's development are:

- Planning for a population of 5,095 people at 2021 and 6,155 people in 2031, a decreasing household size and an ageing population. This equates to demand for about 650 new dwellings to 2021.
- Protecting heritage assets, including the Main Street streetscape.
- Managing the scale, bulk and setbacks of new buildings, particularly within the town core and established township areas.
- Protecting the semi-rural landscape along the Melbourne-Lancefield Road.
- Maintaining and enhancing the open space corridor along Five Mile Creek.
- Providing employment, industrial and commercial development opportunities for the future, to help redress the imbalance between residential land and employment opportunities in Romsey. Demand analysis suggests that approximately 21 ha of new industrial land is required to 2021. These requirements reflect an aspiration to have the equivalent of 45% of Romsey's industrial workforce employed in the town. Further expansion of these areas will be required in the period to 2031. Some expansion of the town centre Business 1 Zone is required for commercial growth.
- Encouraging medium density residential development close to facilities, transport links and services, in recognition of changing demographics including an increasing proportion of one and two person households.
- Planning to provide a healthy environment that encourages walking and cycling, social and other recreational activities.
- Adopting sustainable development principles.

- Understanding the impacts of State Planning Policy on the future development of Romsey and adopting key policy directions.

The key features of the ODP include:

- Provision of areas for future residential growth – one growth front to the south of the existing town is proposed. Provision is made for 49 hectares of additional residential land to be developed to 2021. Further land will be required in the future – approximately 46 ha between 2021 and 2031 – if Romsey is to continue its current growth pattern.
- At least 15% of new dwellings should be provided in the form of medium density housing. This will be encouraged within 200-300 m of the commercial core where access to services is high. The structure plan defines the preferred area for medium density development.
- Some unsewered Residential 1 Zone areas are rezoned to Low Density Residential, reflecting the absence of wastewater services, the likely difficulties in providing sewerage in the future, the current character of the area and its relatively poor access to the town centre.
- Expansion of central Romsey as the urban area's primary commercial centre, taking advantage of existing infrastructure, services, retail and employment opportunities. Implementation of heritage controls will reflect and reinforce the distinctive character of the town centre.
- Greenfield land to the south of Romsey, bordered by Greens Lane and the Melbourne-Lancefield Road, is proposed for future industrial land. Seven hectares of Business 4 Zone land is planned and intended to provide for highway retail, large format retail, wholesale and some service industrial activities. Fourteen hectares of Industrial 1 Zone land is intended to provide for service industrial, manufacturing, transport and storage activities.
- The zoning of the Mitchell Court industrial area is proposed to be changed from Industrial 1 to Industrial 3 in recognition of the sensitive residential, recreation and primary school uses that surround the area.
- The character of Romsey is an important issue for the community and the ODP provides a preliminary assessment of residential character and residential design guidelines. It is proposed to undertake a detailed town character study to complement and implement the ODP. Where development is subject to a permit it should proceed in accordance with the design guidelines in the ODP in the interim.
- Adequate active open space is currently provided, mainly within central Romsey. However, Five Mile Creek is identified as a long term opportunity for shared cycling and walking trails.
- Redeveloped and expanded sporting facilities in the Romsey Park and Primary School precinct, including use of recycled water where practicable.
- Work with education providers to promote the establishment of a secondary school in Romsey, in order to promote community cohesion, local employment and more sustainable transport patterns. Planning should safeguard for a future secondary school on land adjacent to the primary school.
- Complete and implement the Romsey Movement Network Study, providing a detailed plan for transport improvements.
- Indicate the likely future need for an upgraded intersection at Barry Street/Melbourne-Lancefield Road and investigate upgrading Portingales and Greens Lanes to provide alternative access between the industrial area and areas to the south of Romsey

Key features are illustrated in the structure plan set out on the following page.

Issues relating to Rural Living and Low Density Residential Zones have generally not been considered as part of the ODP process. This will be considered through a Settlement Strategy for the Shire and a subsequent Rural Living Strategy.

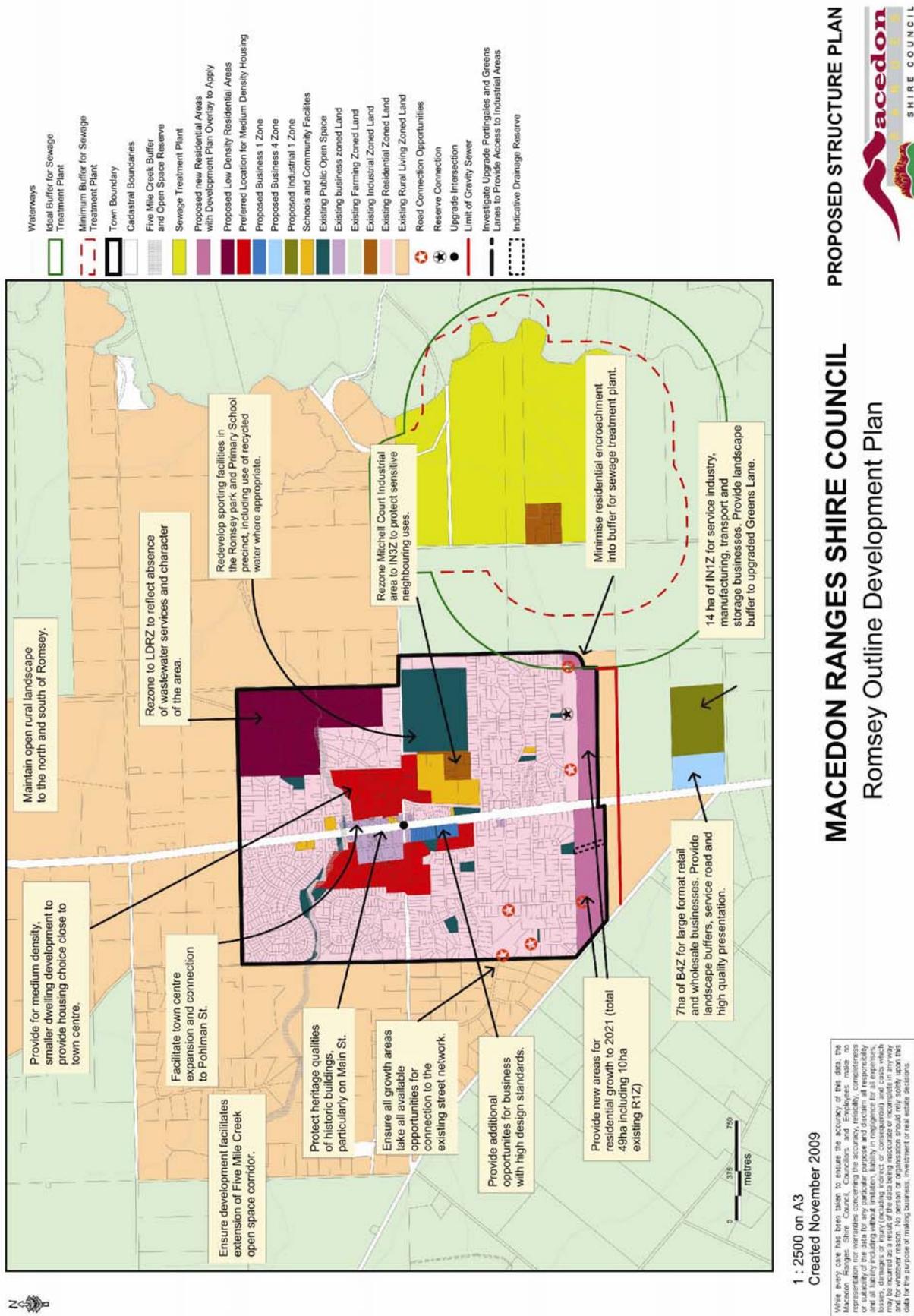


Figure 1: Proposed Structure Plan

1 : 2500 on A3  
Created November 2009

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## 2. Introduction

This document has been developed by Macedon Ranges Shire Council, based on an original draft from Beca Consulting and with input from Conceptz Town Planners.

The report describes in detail a vision for Romsey, project background, principles and a draft Outline Development Plan. It is presented in the following sections:

- Background – the main body of the report including planning context, demographic analysis, key issue analysis, land supply and demand analysis and sustainable development principles.
- Outline Development Plan – the primary outcomes of the study including key ODP influences and the draft ODP.

The process of preparing the ODP has involved research and collation of background material and extensive community consultation. An early draft of the ODP was exhibited for community comment between November 2006 and February 2007 and later drafts were exhibited between October 2008 and January 2009 and during May/June 2009.

The development of the ODP has included identification of the planning and development opportunities and constraints which characterise the area. Key findings of this work will form the basis of a Planning Scheme amendment and the report will be a reference document in the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.

The primary planning period for the ODP is 2006-2021. The start date reflects the fact that 2006 was the latest census year and the end date provides for a 10-15 year land supply as required by State policy. Although the ODP considers demographic trends through to 2031, to generally coincide with Melbourne 2030, it does not attempt to provide any direction for growth beyond 2021. This reflects the fact that the Council is preparing a Settlement Strategy for the Shire as a whole that will manage long term growth. Long term planning for Romsey will need to consider the outcomes of that Strategy.

The ODP does not generally address issues concerning rural land in the vicinity of Romsey – this will be dealt with through the Settlement Strategy and subsequently through a Rural living Strategy.



### 3. Study Area Context

Romsey is located within the Macedon Ranges Shire, approximately 63km north-west of the Melbourne CBD. The township forms the major urban centre in the east of the municipality and is located on the Lancefield-Melbourne Road.

Historic red-brick buildings and mature European trees line the spacious main street. Romsey was named after a town of the same name in Hampshire, England. Prior to European settlement the area was occupied by the Wurundjeri people. The first white people on the present town site arrived in the early 1850s. Finding the soil was very fertile, agricultural enterprises soon emerged. The former Romsey railway station was on the now dismantled Clarkefield-Lancefield railway which operated between 1881 and 1956.

Romsey was a hub of agricultural and pastoral activities for most of the twentieth century. It is now responding to new types of farms and farm practices, tourism and lifestyle residents. The surrounds of Romsey contain some of the local wineries of the Macedon Ranges, which is a significant industry.



Figure 2: Locality Plan, Romsey in the region

Historic buildings, wide streets, significant vegetation, Five Mile Creek, open space and large residential allotments characterise the current urban environment and are highly valued by local residents.

The following context plan illustrates key existing features of Romsey and surrounds. There is no defined study area boundary – the area of consideration varies between issues. The context plan shows the Australian Bureau of Statistics boundary for the Romsey urban area, which is the basis of the population statistics used in the ODP. However the effective study area when considering Romsey’s commercial and industrial role, for example, is much broader. The landscape around Romsey is generally flat to undulating open pastoral country.

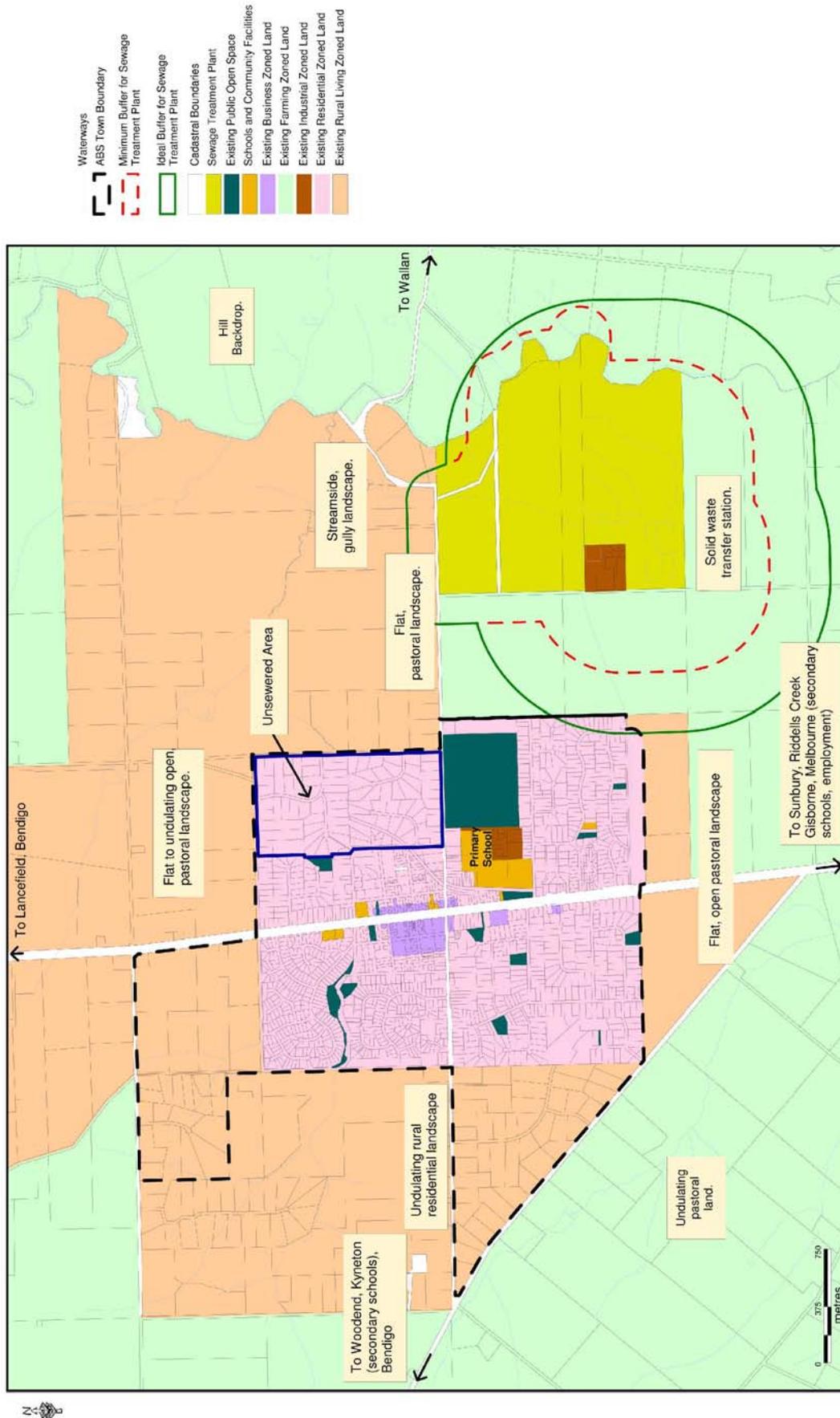


Figure 3: Existing conditions and context plan

The Melbourne-Lancefield Road, also known as the Lancefield-Melbourne Road, Main Street or Main Road, is the primary north-south highway, providing access to Melbourne. The main east-west route is the Woodend-Wallan Road, also known as Barry Street or the Romsey-Wallan Road.

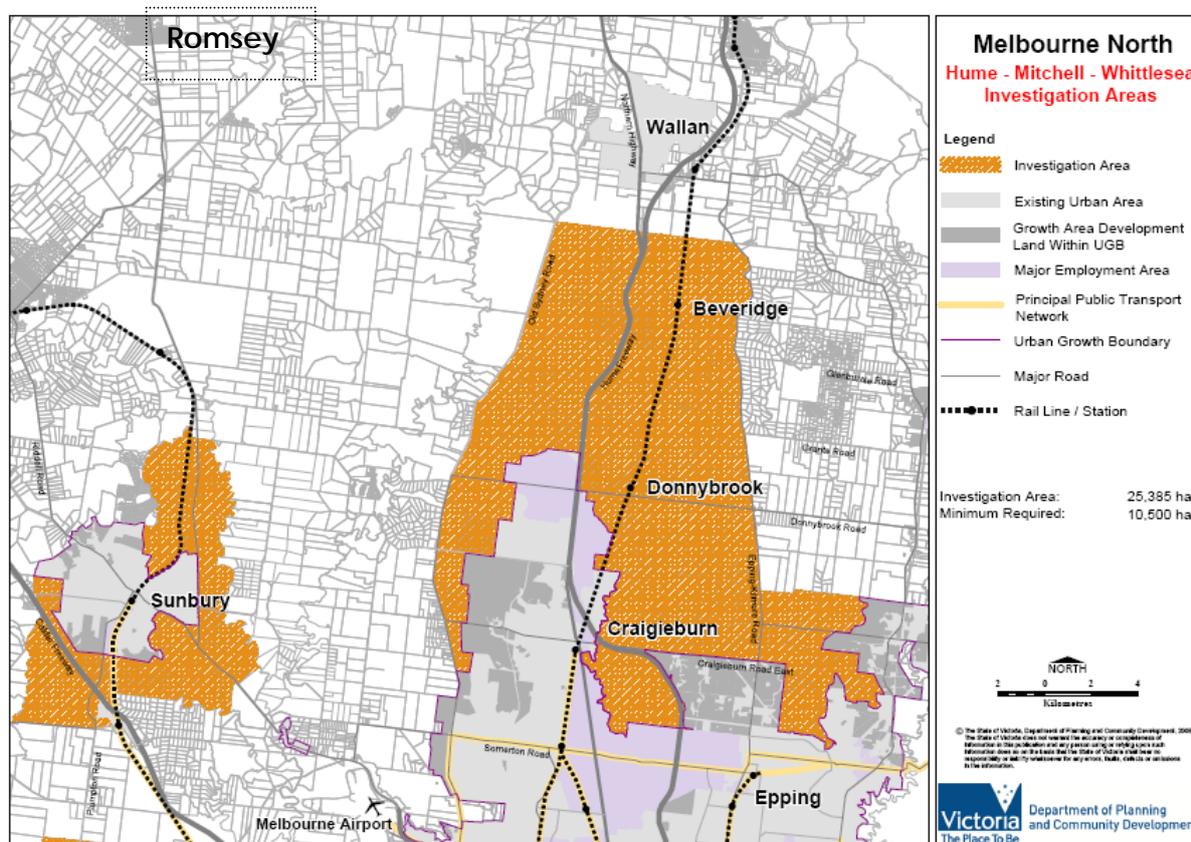


Figure 4: Melbourne Urban Growth Boundary expansion – investigation areas (Romsey at top left).

Source: Melbourne 2030: a planning update Melbourne @ 5 million, DPCD 2008.

Romsey is experiencing increased growth pressures due to its appeal to those who prefer to live outside metropolitan Melbourne and commute to Melbourne for work. Over recent decades the town has grown at a high rate and provides a desirable location for families and those seeking to retire from larger rural holdings.

Romsey and its residents have strong links to Sunbury and the Airport corridor in Melbourne for employment and commerce. At least 55% of employed people living in Romsey work in the metropolitan area, while only 29% work within the Macedon Ranges Shire.<sup>1</sup> Further details of employment location are set out in section 8.2.

As metropolitan Melbourne grows, its influence in Romsey may increase further. The diagram above shows investigation areas for expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary (Romsey is in the top left hand corner). While not all of the investigation areas will be developed, at least in the short-medium term, the plan illustrates the increasing proximity of the metropolitan area to Romsey.

Romsey has relatively poor access to transport infrastructure, with road access to Melbourne reliant on the two lane Melbourne-Lancefield Road. There is no operative railway line in the area and the only public transport consists of very infrequent bus services connecting to other centres. This is reflected in travel patterns that do not meet sustainability principles. In terms of journey to work, more than 68% of workers drive a car (the highest proportion in the Shire, along with Gisborne), while just

<sup>1</sup> Haby, K, *Romsey Demographic Profile*, MRSC, August 2008, p17

1% walk and only 3% use public transport for at least part of their journey to work. These patterns are exacerbated by the absence of a secondary school in Romsey. This means that every school day approximately 300 students need to be transported to other centres from the Romsey township alone.<sup>2</sup> Significant numbers of students are also transported from Lancefield and surrounding rural districts that would be better served by a secondary school in Romsey.

Romsey’s location is reflected in its position in the broader regional planning framework, as illustrated in the following diagram from Melbourne 2030. Melbourne 2030 takes a corridor oriented approach to planning for growth, but Romsey sits outside both the Bendigo/Calder corridor and the Seymour/Hume corridor.



**Figure 5: Melbourne 2030 – Regional cities and townships**

<sup>2</sup> MRSC Social Planning 2009 population projections estimate the 2009 population of 10-14 year olds at 341, with 277 in the 15-19 age bracket.

Council undertakes a New Ratepayer Survey which captures the reasons why new residents move into the area and therefore provides an insight into the attributes of the area that are valued by residents. The table below shows the results for new ratepayers, where Romsey is the nearest town, between 2006 and June 2009. Respondents were able to select more than one reason so the categories are not mutually exclusive.

<b>Romsey</b>		
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>N.</b>
1	For a rural lifestyle	62
2	Beauty of the area	43
3	More affordable housing	34
4	Proximity to Melbourne	32
5	To raise children	28
6	To be near family and friends	27
=7	'Tree' change	13
=7	Retirement	13
=7	Good investment opportunity	13
=8	Other	5
=8	Business opportunity	5
9	Employment opportunity	4

**Table 1: Reasons for living in Macedon Ranges Shire [where Romsey is nearest town]**

The top two reasons for moving to the area are consistent with results for the Shire as a whole and reflect themes that commonly arise in consultation through the ODP process. However 'more affordable housing' is more significant attractor in Romsey than in other areas – this was ranked sixth by new ratepayers across the Shire generally.

## 4. Vision

To achieve a strong independent future a better balance between residential, commercial and industrial activities needs to be found for Romsey. Council will ensure this can occur by providing sufficient land for growth in a manner that promotes sustainable use of that land and new development that does not undermine the existing character of the town.

Romsey will grow to be a community of around 5,095 people at 2021. Romsey will offer a chance to live and work in a rural country town environment, with excellent sports and recreational opportunities. Local employment and better services will mean that the opportunity to enjoy a rural lifestyle will not necessarily come with the cost of long distance travel and commuting. A range of residential options will be available to suit budget and lifestyle needs and it will offer a place to invest for commercial growth in a stable and supportive community.

New residential areas will be linked to key activity areas and other parts of the existing urban area. The form and character of much of the existing town will be retained and protected from inappropriate redevelopment. To provide for more efficient use of land, new residential areas will be developed with a mix of residential lots and housing styles to meet all projected needs, without compromising the character of the existing town.



The proportion of medium density housing will increase to 15% of new dwellings, providing greater housing choice for the community as demographics change. Medium density dwellings of high quality design will be provided in close proximity to the town centre.

Additional land will be set aside for commercial development to allow existing businesses to expand and new businesses to establish in the town. Industrial and wholesale business opportunities will be facilitated in a new business park with co-ordinated layout and design. This will be located to the south of the town, ensuring that freight traffic does not need to pass through the town to reach metropolitan Melbourne.

The significant landscapes, heritage features, wide Main Street and significant vegetation that contribute to Romsey's character will continue to be protected. Five Mile Creek will be enhanced as the primary open space corridor in the township. The surrounding rural landscape and open rural setting between Romsey and Lancefield will remain a prominent feature of the local environment.



# Part 1: Background information

## 5. Planning Context

### 5.1 State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF)

Every planning scheme includes the SPPF. Its purpose is to inform planning authorities and responsible authorities of those aspects of State level planning policy which they are to take into account and give effect to in planning and administering their respective areas.

Key State planning policy principles and objectives are outlined below.

#### 5.1.1. Clause 11.03 Introduction, goals & principles

Clause 11.03 identifies seven statements of general principles that elaborate upon the objectives of planning in Victoria. A planning authority preparing amendments to a planning scheme or a responsible authority administering a scheme must consider these overarching and interlocking principles.

##### **Settlement (Clause 11.03-1)**

Planning is to anticipate and respond to the needs of existing and future communities, through provision of zoned and serviced land for housing, employment, recreation, community facilities and infrastructure. Planning is to recognise the need for, and as far as practicable contribute towards:

- Health and safety
- Diversity of choice
- Adaptation in response to changing technology
- Economic viability
- A high standard of urban design and amenity
- Energy efficiency
- Prevention of pollution to land, water and air
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources
- Accessibility
- Land use and transport integration

##### **Environment (Clause 11.03-2)**

Planning is to contribute to the protection of air, land and water quality and the conservation of natural ecosystems, resources, and cultural heritage. In particular, planning should:

- Adopt a best practice environmental management and risk management approach which aims to avoid or minimise environmental degradation and hazards.
- Prevent problems created by siting incompatible land uses close together.
- Help to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support (including ecosystems, habitats, species and genetic diversity)
- Protect areas and sites with significant historic, architectural, aesthetic, scientific and cultural values.

### **Management of resources (11.03-3)**

Planning is to assist in the conservation and wise use of natural resources including energy, water, land, flora, fauna and minerals to support both environmental quality and sustainable development over the long term, through judicious decisions on the location, pattern and timing of development.

### **Infrastructure (Clause 11.03-4)**

Planning for development of urban physical and community infrastructure should enable it to be provided in a way that is efficient, equitable, accessible and timely. Growth and redevelopment of settlements should be planned in a manner that allows for the logical and efficient provision and maintenance of infrastructure, including the setting aside of land for the construction of future transport routes.

### **Economic well-being (Clause 11.03-5)**

Planning is to contribute to the economic well-being of communities and the State as a whole by supporting and fostering economic growth and development by providing sufficient zoned land, facilitating decisions, and resolving land use conflicts, so that each district may build on its strengths and achieve its economic potential.

### **Social needs (Clause 11.03-6)**

Planning is to recognise social needs by providing land for a range of accessible community resources, such as affordable housing, places of employment, open space, and education, cultural, health and community support facilities.

### **Regional co-operation (Clause 11.03-7)**

Planning authorities are to identify the potential for regional impacts in their decision-making and co-ordinate strategic planning with their neighbours and other public bodies to achieve sustainable development and effective and efficient use of resources.

## **5.1.2. Clause 12 Metropolitan development**

Whilst this clause applies to Metropolitan Melbourne, which does not include Macedon Ranges Shire Council, its objectives and strategies influence municipalities beyond Metropolitan Melbourne and should be applied and taken into account where relevant.

Key planning policy principles and objectives are outlined below.

### **Activity Centres (Clause 12.01-2)**

New development should be concentrated within activity centres near current infrastructure and in areas best able to cope with change.

In the hierarchy of activity centres the Romsey town centre is considered as a 'neighbourhood activity centre.' Neighbourhood activity centres should:

- Have a mix of uses that meet local convenience needs.
- Be accessible to a viable user population by walking and cycling.
- Be accessible by local bus services with public transport links to higher order activity centres.
- Be an important community focal point.

Higher density housing should be encouraged in and around activity centres. It must be designed to fit the context and enhance the character of the area while providing a variety of housing options for different types of households.

### **Housing (Clause 12.01-2)**

The policy seeks to locate a substantial proportion of new housing in or close to activity centres and other strategic redevelopment sites that offer good access to services and transport by:

- Encouraging higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to activity centres and public transport.
- Ensuring housing stock matches changing demand by widening housing choice.
- Ensuring planning for growth areas provides a mix of housing types and higher densities around activity centres.
- Ensuring all new development appropriately responds to its landscape, valued built form and cultural context.

### **Regional cities (Clause 12.03-2)**

Promote the growth of regional cities and key towns on regional transport corridors as part of a 'networked cities' model by encouraging planning for regional areas and cities that:

- Delivers an adequate supply of land for housing and industry to meet forecast growth.
- Ensures that new development is supported by strong transport links that provide an appropriate choice of travel.
- Limits the impact of urban development on non-urban areas and supports development in those areas that can accommodate growth.
- Protects conservation and heritage values and the surrounding natural resource base.
- Develops and reinforces the distinctive roles and character of each place.
- Fosters the development of towns around the regional cities that are on regional transport routes.

### **Urban design (Clause 12.05-2)**

Promote good urban design to make the environment more liveable and attractive by:

- Ensuring new development or redevelopment contributes to community and cultural life by improving safety, diversity and choice, the quality of living and working environments, accessibility and inclusiveness and environmental sustainability.
- Requiring development to respond to its context in terms of urban character, cultural heritage, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.
- Ensuring sensitive landscape areas are protected and that new development does not detract from their natural quality.
- Ensuring transport corridors integrate land use planning, urban design and transport planning and are developed and managed with particular attention to urban design aspects such as open space potential and the use of vegetation to maintain wildlife corridors and greenhouse sinks.

### **Cultural identity and neighbourhood character (Clause 12.05-2)**

Recognise and protect cultural identity, neighbourhood character and sense of place by:

- Ensuring development responds and contributes to existing sense of place and cultural identity.
- Ensuring development recognises distinctive urban forms and layout and their relationship to landscape and vegetation.
- Ensuring development responds to its context and reinforces special characteristics of local environment and place.

### **Safety (Clause 12.05-2)**

Improve community safety and encourage neighbourhood design that makes people feel safe by:

- Ensuring the design of buildings, public spaces and the mix of activities contribute to safety and perceptions of safety.
- Supporting initiatives that provide safer walking and cycling routes and improved safety for people using public transport.
- Ensuring suitable locations for emergency services.

### **Neighbourhood design (Clause 12.05-2)**

Promote excellent neighbourhood design to create attractive, walkable and diverse communities featuring:

- Compact neighbourhoods that are oriented around walkable distances between activities and where neighbourhood centres provide access to services and facilities to meet day-to-day needs.
- Reduced dependence on car use because public transport is easy to use, there are safe and attractive spaces for walking and cycling, and subdivision layouts allow easy movement through and between neighbourhoods.
- A range of lot sizes and housing types to satisfy the needs and aspirations of different groups of people.
- Integration of housing, workplaces, shopping, recreation and community services, to provide a mix and level of activity that attracts people, creates a safe environment, stimulates interaction and provides a lively community focus.
- A range of open spaces to meet a variety of needs, with links to open space networks and regional parks where possible.
- A strong sense of place created because neighbourhood development emphasises existing cultural heritage values, attractive built form and landscape character.
- Environmentally friendly development that includes improved energy efficiency, water conservation, local management of stormwater and waste water treatment, less waste and reduced air pollution.
- Protection and enhancement of native habitat and discouragement of the spread and planting of noxious weeds.

### **Open space (Clause 12.05-2)**

Improve the quality and distribution of open space and ensure long-term protection of public open space by:

- Ensuring land identified as critical to the completion of open space links is transferred for open space purposes.
- Ensuring public access is not prevented by developments along stream banks and foreshores.
- Ensuring public land immediately adjoining waterways and coastlines remains in public ownership.
- Providing new parkland in growth areas and in areas that have an undersupply of parkland.
- Ensuring that urban open space provides for nature conservation, recreation and play, formal and informal sport, social interaction and peace and solitude.
- Protecting sites and features of high scientific, nature conservation, biodiversity, heritage, geological or landscape value.

- Ensuring open space is designed to accommodate people of all abilities, ages and cultures.

## 5.2 Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF)

The LPPF sets a local and regional strategic policy context for a municipality and comprises the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and local planning policies.

### Municipal Strategic Statement

The *Municipal Strategic Statement* (MSS) is Council's key strategic planning document for a 10 to 15 year timeframe. The MSS is visionary in that it summarises Council's strategic plans and future directions for land use and development. The MSS is functional in that it provides a framework for decision-making and provides a link between objectives, strategies, policies, Council initiative and the State Planning Policy Framework. The MSS also provides a strategic justification for zones, overlays, local policies and controls contained in the planning scheme.

It should be noted that the MSS is currently under review and the findings will form part of a future planning scheme amendment. Rural character and associated landscape values need to be given detailed consideration in managing the future development of rural living.

Tourism is a growing industry based on recreation, leisure activities, environment, wineries, heritage and landscape features.

The local community of Romsey need to be encouraged in local industry, to create local employment opportunities and to increase the non-commuting population. There is also a need to help protect agriculturally productive land from uses that may compromise its potential, such as rural residential development.

### Local Planning Policies

Key objectives of Clause 22.02-6 Romsey are:

- To keep urban development within defined township boundaries to protect agricultural land;
- To protect the townscape and heritage features of the town;
- To consolidate the retail area on the west side of the main street and provide for limited highway orientated uses;
- To provide for a greater mix of housing densities and styles as the town grows; and
- To strengthen Romsey's economic base by making additional land available for the establishment of industry and service business.

## 5.3 Zones & Overlays

The Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP) provide a suite of standard zones for State-wide application. The zones are administered to implement the SPPF and LPPF, and thus each planning scheme includes only those zones required to implement its strategy. There is no ability to vary the zones or to introduce local zones. Some zones have schedules that allow tailoring for local circumstances, such as the Mixed Use Zone and Rural Conservation Zone.

Further planning provisions may apply to a site or area through the application of an overlay. Generally, overlays apply to a single issue, or related set of issues, such as heritage, an

environmental concern or flooding.

In Romsey, the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) is applied across some vacant residential land, whilst the Heritage Overlay (HO) is also used to identify places of heritage significance. The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) is used through some of the urban area along Five Mile Creek to identify land that is likely to experience flooding in a 1 in 100 year flood event.



Figure 6: Existing zonings in Romsey

## 6. Key Background Documents

A number of documents have been completed for both the Shire and the Romsey township area that are relevant to the Project. The number of documents reviewed is extensive, though only summaries of reference documents to the Planning Scheme that are relevant to Romsey are provided below.

### State Government Documents

State Planning Policies (Planning Scheme) (outlined in Section 5)  
Melbourne 2030  
Statement of Planning Policy No. 8  
Growing Victoria Together  
Victoria: Leading the Way

### Local Government Documents

Municipal Strategic Statement (outlined in Section 5)  
Macedon Ranges Leisure Strategy Plan  
Macedon Ranges Housing Strategy  
Macedon Ranges Population Projection  
Macedon Ranges Open Space Strategy  
Macedon Ranges & Spa Country Tourism Strategy  
Macedon Ranges Cultural Heritage & Landscape Study  
Amendment C8: Residential and Industrial Land Review Panel Report

### Melbourne 2030

Melbourne 2030 is the State Government's 30-year plan to manage growth and change across metropolitan Melbourne and the surrounding region. It emphasises the city's interdependence with regional Victoria, to provide maximum benefit to the whole State.

Melbourne 2030 focuses primarily on metropolitan Melbourne. However, it also deals more broadly with the wider region where, increasingly, development is linked to and affected by metropolitan Melbourne in terms of commuting, business and recreation. This includes Romsey to an extent, although the Melbourne-Lancefield Road is not designated a regional transport corridor.

The core of Melbourne 2030 is the following nine 'directions':

- A more compact city
- Better management of metropolitan growth
- Networks with the regional cities
- A more prosperous city
- A great place to be
- A fairer city
- A greener city
- Better transport links
- Better planning decisions, careful management

## Statement of Planning Policy No. 8 – Macedon Ranges and Surrounds

Romsey lies within the policy area of Statement of Planning Policy No. 8 (PP8) was introduced in 1975 to the Macedon Ranges area and is now included as a reference document to the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme, forming the basis of Clause 22.01 – Macedon and Surrounds. Implementation of this strategy is currently being reviewed by Council.

### Growing Victoria Together

**Growing Victoria Together** is a ten-year vision that sets out the Government's goals for Victoria in order to make the State stronger, more caring and innovative. The plan incorporates a balance of social, economic and environmental considerations. The vision is that by 2010 Victoria will be a State with a thriving economy, quality health and education, a healthy environment, caring communities and a vibrant democracy. Features include:

- New homes built in Victoria will have five star energy ratings. Progress is also being made on increasing the development and use of renewable energy sources.
- Continuing opportunities and emerging challenges for commercial development will be monitored within Regional Victoria to ensure that the benefits of strong economic growth are shared.
- Introduction of more sustainable land management practices for the industrial sector which will increase protection for the natural environment.
- Rejuvenation of the roads and public transport across the State to improve accessibility and efficiency.
- Residents could be more actively involved in decision-making through consultation, increased participation in decisions affecting their local community and involvement in their local services.

### Victoria: Leading the Way

**Victoria Leading the Way** sets out the Government's 19 priority actions to strengthen Victoria's performance in exports, investment and business growth. These measures are to ensure that Victoria's strong economic growth continues into the future by attracting global investment and developing innovative industries across the State.

The Action Plan is to drive new investment in Victoria in order to stimulate the creation of new jobs, this should also include lowering costs for businesses and support increased exports of our goods and services.

In October 2003 the Government launched the *Make it Happen in Provincial Victoria* campaign, and committed \$5.7 million over 3 years to implement Phase 2. This phase comprised of two components – a \$2.85 million three year marketing campaign targeting Melbournians to relocate to provincial Victoria and \$2.85 million to assist local councils drive new economic and investment opportunities on a regional basis.

## 6.1 Council Documents

### Macedon Ranges Leisure Strategy Plan (2005)

There is a lack of youth specific indoor and outdoor recreation space available within the Shire. Romsey is one of the youngest towns in the Shire and new facilities need to be developed.

Where there are facilities outside of town, there is a major lack of public transport between the townships. This will be of importance with the aging community in the future for retirees. Swimming falls into this category. 23% of the Shire's residents have advised that they do not currently participate in swimming but would like to on a regular basis in the future.

Romsey and Lancefield contain the only inter-town trail within the Shire and it is very popular with the residents.

Future development of the Romsey Primary School site is a potential solution to meet with the lack of recreational facilities. The recreational facilities that do not meet the needs of the community are the football and cricket ovals, outdoor netball courts and soccer fields. A site is also being currently sought for Romsey Little Athletics. The local Primary School does not have a swimming program due to high transport costs. There is also little provision for horse riding.

The Plan seeks to build upon the existing network of cycling paths to ensure that passive and unstructured recreational opportunities are also encouraged.

### Macedon Ranges Playground Strategy 2009-2014

This document provides town specific objectives for playgrounds. Key issues for Romsey include:

- The need to provide a diversified play experience with additional equipment targeting the 8-12 age group at the Lions Park Skate Park and the Collier Close Reserve.
- The need to provide local playgrounds in new areas, including the recently subdivided area around Robb Drive.



## Macedon Ranges Housing Strategy

Completed in July 2007, the Housing Strategy provides a framework to ensure a planned and well-considered approach by Council, on behalf of the community, to enhance and develop housing that is appropriate, diverse, affordable and sustainable.

The Housing Strategy identifies that more single person households will lead to demand for medium density housing in towns in the Shire.

## Macedon Ranges Open Space Strategy

This work outlines the needs for provision of open space at a Shire wide and township level. Though prepared in 1999, delays in implementing the recommendations make it a relevant reference document.

The assessment indicated that open space in towns varies considerably in quality. For example, many 'pocket parks' are simply slashed, have no or few facilities and have very little use. Conversely, some parks along waterways attract a wide range of users.

In summary:

- Many opportunities were identified to improve visual amenity and provide additional shade and shelter and facilities such as seats, picnic facilities and signs;
- Weeds are a major problem, particularly along waterways, and increased weed control and re-vegetation are needed;
- Playgrounds often lacked diversity and opportunities for information and creative children's play;
- Shared pathways have become popular in recent years but many of the existing trails are poorly signposted and are not adequately linked to residential areas and community facilities;
- Overall, there was a high proportion of undeveloped land set aside for open space. Opportunities were identified to rationalise the distribution of open space including the sale of surplus land.

Recommendations for Romsey focus on the use of Five Mile Creek as a major town asset.

## Cultural Heritage & Landscape Study

Completed in 1994, this comprehensive study contains a detailed environmental history of Romsey, a detailed landscape assessment of the study area including individual recommendations for preservation/improvement, and detailed citations and assessments for individual buildings and sites.

Some aspects of this study have already been implemented, but Council is continuing the process of including sites within the Heritage Overlay.

## 7. Demographic Profile

This analysis is based on information from the:

- 'Towns in Time' series 2006, published by DPCD for Romsey in 2008. This data is from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 Censuses of Population and Housing. (Note that the 2008 edition has population counts for earlier years that are different from those recorded in previous issues of 'Towns in Time'.
- Macedon Ranges Population Projections 2009, which combined housing approvals data and population growth to predict for population for specific towns within the Shire.
- Macedon Ranges Shire Housing Strategy 2007.
- Special Order Purchase and other ABS Census 2006 data for the township of Romsey.

Population statistics and population projections tell us about the dynamics of our society and our economy and how these are reflected in changing patterns of settlement. They are therefore an important decision making tool. Projections paint a picture of the future and highlight the needs and challenges for new policies and practices and indicate where new services and products may be needed. Understanding this growth – what is driving it; how it is distributed across the Shire; where it is leading us to and how we might manage this change to obtain the outcomes we seek for Romsey – empowers the planning process.

### 7.1 Planning Context

Population and housing data, trends and analysis heavily influence all elements of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.

The State Planning Policy Framework sets out land use principles which require population analysis to justify Planning Schemes' further contents. For example, "*Planning Authorities should undertake planning to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 10 year period, taking account of opportunities for redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas as well as the limits of land capability and natural hazards, environmental quality and the costs of providing infrastructure ...*" and "*in planning for urban growth, planning authorities should encourage consolidation of existing urban areas while respecting neighbourhood character. Planning authorities should encourage higher density and mixed use development near public transport routes.*"

Most Planning Schemes include specific population analysis in their Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS). For Macedon Ranges this is currently included at Clause 21.02 'Municipal Snapshot'. This analysis provides the basis for all other planning scheme policies and to justify the use of certain zones and overlays in particular areas.

### 7.2 Macedon Ranges Shire

Key observations are:

- The Shire's population overall is projected to increase from 39,989 in 2006 to 49,898 in 2021, 54,039 in 2026<sup>3</sup> and 59,220 in 2031<sup>4</sup>. This represents an increase of about 21,548 persons over the period - an average annual growth rate of about 1.9% or 718 persons per year to 2031<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Projections for 2021 and 2026 are Victoria in Future 2008 projections, Department of Planning and Community Development,

<sup>4</sup> Macedon Ranges Shire (2006) Population Projections Report

- The Shire experienced rapid growth between 1996 and 2001 (2.1% per annum). However, it is doubtful that this rate of growth will be maintained in the future. Rather the population is expected to grow more slowly but at a steady rate over the next thirty years. The slowing of growth is already evident from the 2006 Census which shows annual population growth of the Shire reduced to 1.2% per annum in the period 2001 to 2006<sup>6</sup>. This is the same rate of growth as the period 1991 to 1996.<sup>7</sup> Whether the trend for slower growth will be maintained or whether it will fluctuate with other periods of rapid growth in the future is yet to be seen but will need to be monitored. Council's previous population projections and DSE Victoria in Future projections have been based on a continuation of earlier growth patterns and this has led to an over-estimation of growth that will need to be factored into planning in the future.
- Similar to the trend in Australia and Victoria overall, Macedon Ranges Shire is also experiencing growth in the number of small-sized households (one or two persons). This is due to a myriad of reasons including an ageing population, high rates of divorce and separation, low rates of partnering, delay of child bearing and so on. The high demand for housing currently being observed in Melbourne and in interface areas is therefore not due entirely to population growth but also to this change in family, social and household dynamics<sup>8</sup> since more dwellings are required to house fewer people in each.
- New housing developments in the Shire have consisted almost exclusively of homes of three or more bedrooms on large lots, despite the trend towards households with fewer people. In the context of population and household projections a continuation of the present style of housing development is unsustainable and may be unsuited to the needs of a large and growing proportion of the population.
- The average household size in Macedon Ranges is expected to continue to gradually reduce. ABS first release data for 2006 census indicates average household size in the Shire was 2.89 persons. In 2006 the average household size in Macedon Ranges Shire was estimated to be 2.8 persons. By 2031, average household size is projected to be 2.7 persons. The 2006 census shows that already in the Macedon Ranges Shire, 52% of households comprise only one or two persons.
- Similar to Australia and Victoria overall, Macedon Ranges Shire will continue to age significantly. In 2006, 11% of the population was aged 65 or over. By 2031, this figure is expected to more than double to 24%.<sup>9</sup> Homes too large for the needs of aged residents have implications for individuals' health and wellbeing and can often mean additional expense for Councils trying to maintain people in their homes through the home services (HACC) program.
- By 2031 the number of lone-person households will have increased from 19% to 25%. Growth in small households may be more rapid than predicted with the 2006 census showing that 52% of households in the Shire already comprise one or two persons.
- Of the 13,594 occupied private dwellings in Macedon Ranges, 94.7% were separate houses and 4.6% were units, semi-detached, row, terrace or townhouses. In Victoria this rate is 76.4% separate dwellings and 22.6% units, semi-detached, row, terrace, or townhouses respectively. Thus Macedon Ranges Shire has a shortage of smaller type dwellings and a lack of choice in accommodation compared to Victoria. In light of a trend of an ageing population and smaller household size this is of economic and social concern.

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<sup>5</sup> Macedon Ranges Shire, *2006 Population Projections Report*

<sup>6</sup> DCPCD *Victorian Population Bulletin Special Edition 2007*

<sup>7</sup> DSE *Towns in Time*

<sup>8</sup> Macedon Ranges Shire, *2006 Housing Strategy*

<sup>9</sup> MRSC *Population Projections 2009*.

## 7.3 Romsey township 1976 - 2006

Key observations in relation to the growth of the Romsey population are:

- Romsey township area population (place of enumeration) was 3,457 in 2006 - up from the 945 in 1981. Over the 25 year period this represents an average increase in population of about 100 persons per year.
- In the period between 2001 and 2006 Romsey was one of the Shire's fastest growing towns at 2.7% per annum<sup>10</sup>. The annual growth rate in Romsey has ranged from: 8.9% for the ten years 1981 to 1991 to 3.2% for 1991 to 2001 and 2.7% for 2001 to 2006.<sup>11</sup>
- Analysis of average household size indicates relative stability of household size between 1981 and 2001 at around 3 persons per occupied private dwelling. In 2006 average household size in Romsey was 3.0 compared to 3.14 in 2001 and 3.19 in 1996. The Shire average household size was 2.8 persons per household in 2006.
- Overall Romsey has a younger population in comparison to the Shire with a median population age of 34 years compared to the Shire median of 39 years.
- In Romsey in 2006, the ABS recorded only 51 medium density dwellings in a housing stock of 1244 dwellings – just 4% of the total.
- According to 2008 Towns in Time there were 1,244 total private dwellings (occupied and unoccupied) in Romsey, up from 1025 in 2001. This represents a total growth in housing stock of 21.4%, or about 44 new dwellings each year in Romsey between 2001 and 2006. Previous to this between 1996 and 2001 there was a growth in new dwellings of 17.5%, or about 30 new dwellings per year<sup>12</sup>.
- An analysis of Council dwelling approval data has also been undertaken in order to identify recent development levels. Council's records for the Romsey township area indicate that since 2001 dwelling approvals have averaged at 41 new dwellings per annum (refer to Table 2 below). The figures are now suggesting a very recent drop off in approvals, but this is considered likely to reflect a tightening land supply rather than a drop in demand.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Average per annum
Number of Building Permits issued	39	46	54	64	32	39	17		41.6
Number of Certificates of Occupancy issued		44	41	43	54	41	32	32	41.0

**Table 2: Dwelling approvals 2001 – 2008 within the Romsey township area.**

Source: Macedon Ranges Shire Council

If these trends are projected forward with a constant 41 dwellings per annum, there will be a need for an additional 615 dwellings between 2006 and 2021; and an additional 1025 dwellings between 2006 and 2031.

<sup>10</sup> Average annual population growth rates (r) from "DPCD Towns in Time" September 2008

<sup>11</sup> DPCD 2008 *Towns in Time* and special order data 2006 census, September 2007

<sup>12</sup> DPCD 2008 *Towns in Time*

## 7.4 Romsey township 2006 - 2031

A range of potential population scenarios for Romsey are shown in Table 3 below.

Year	2.1%	2.7%	3.0%
2006	<b>3457</b>		
2011	3836	3950	4008
2016	4256	4512	4646
<b>2021</b>	4722	5155	5386
2026	5239	5890	6244
<b>2031</b>	5812	<b>6729</b>	7238
Increase	<b>2355</b>	3272	<b>3781</b>
	68%	95%	109%

**Table 3: Potential population Scenarios for Romsey 2006 - 2031**

Variations in the historic rate of growth indicate that there needs to be a level of sensitivity in analysis. As the population base of the town increases, the proportional increase in population will decline. The October 2008 draft of the ODP was based on a constant 2.7% rate of increase, this being the rate calculated by DCPD in its 2008 Towns in Time publication for the period 2001-2006. However, while the growth of population in Romsey over the past 10 years has ranged from 2.7% – 3.2%, it is generally declining as a percentage of total population.

These simplistic extrapolations indicate that the population of Romsey will increase from 3,457 people in 2006 to 5,155 in 2021 and 6,729 in 2031 (based on continual 2.7% per annum rate of growth). While the rate of growth is expected to continue to decline, it is expected to remain higher than the average growth rate for Victoria (1.5%), Regional Victoria (0.8%) and the Shire (approximately 1.5%<sup>13</sup>).

In February 2009 the Council's Social Planning Unit produced a more sophisticated set of population projections for Romsey, summarised in Table 4 below. These projections predict a slightly lower rate of growth than a constant 2.7% projection, with a population of 5,095 at 2021 and 6,155 at 2031, compared to 5,155 at 2021 and 6,729 at 2031. The Social Planning Unit projections predict a slower decline in average household size, with an average size of 2.85 persons at 2031 compared to earlier estimations of 2.70. This has important implications for the number of dwellings required by the community. It should be noted also that the two projections use slightly different starting points – the projections above use *enumerated* population at the 2006 census, whereas the projections below start with *usually resident* population at the 2006 census.

<sup>13</sup> MRSC Strategic Planning approximate calculation based on Victoria in Future 2008.

<b>Population</b>						
Commencement of Year...	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
0-14	948	1,043	1,128	1,218	1,318	1,428
15-24	433	478	525	573	619	666
25-64	1,875	2,125	2,349	2,562	2,773	2,991
65+	271	411	573	743	910	1,070
70+	168	261	374	501	632	761
75+	107	161	232	319	414	511
0-14: (%)	27	26	25	24	23	23
15-24: (%)	12	12	11	11	11	11
25-64: (%)	53	52	51	50	49	49
65+: (%)	8	10	13	15	16	17
70+: (%)	5	6	8	10	11	12
75+: (%)	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,527</b>	<b>4,056</b>	<b>4,575</b>	<b>5,095</b>	<b>5,621</b>	<b>6,155</b>
<b>Households</b>						
Commencement of Year...	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Couple with children	492	541	588	638	691	747
Couple only family	303	373	451	523	590	652
One Parent Family	105	118	131	146	161	177
Other Family	3	4	4	5	5	5
Two Family Household	13	15	18	21	23	26
Three Family Household	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lone Person Household	158	200	251	306	362	418
Group Household	12	14	16	18	20	21
Not Classifiable	62	71	81	90	100	109
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>1,149</b>	<b>1,336</b>	<b>1,541</b>	<b>1,746</b>	<b>1,951</b>	<b>2,156</b>
Persons per household	3.07	3.04	2.97	2.92	2.88	2.85

**Table 4 Romsey population projections by MRSC Social Planning**

While population numbers in every age category in Romsey will increase, the increase will be less for younger people and higher for older people. Indeed there are some significant changes expected in the distribution of the population of Romsey, particularly between the young and old demographic. This pattern is reflected in the Shire as a whole as well as in most other towns. The proportion of children is expected to reduce and the proportion of people over 65 years more than double by 2031.

As can be seen above couples with children are the largest single type of household in Romsey. However, in terms of growth lone person households will nearly treble and couple only households will more than double in number from present figures.

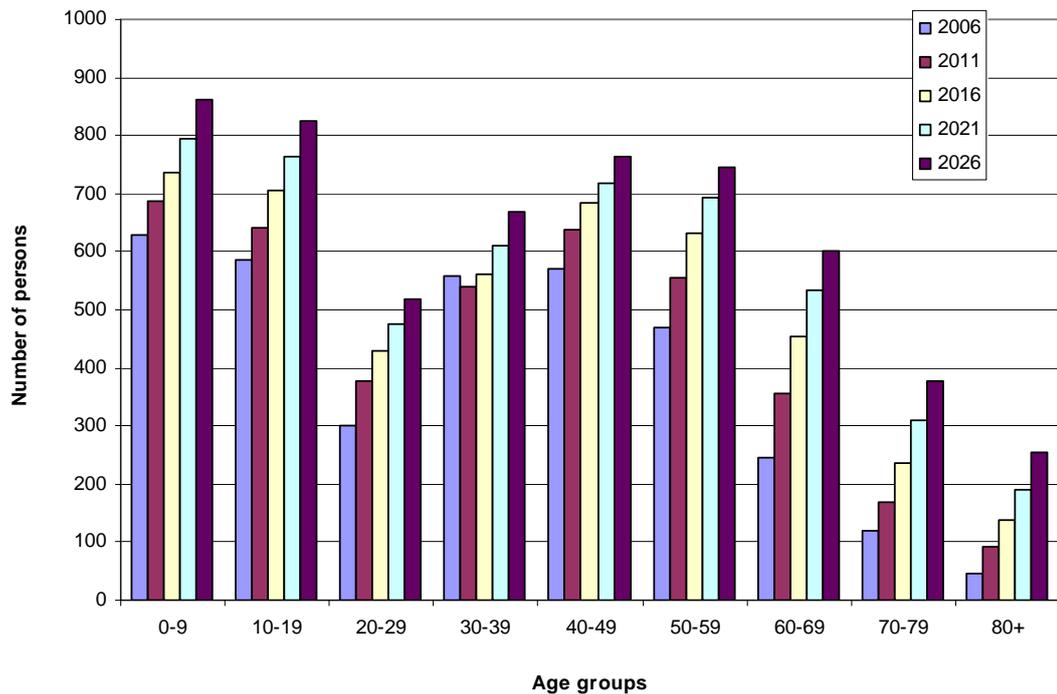


Figure 7: Projected Population Growth by Age Group, Romsey 2006 to 2026 (5-year intervals)

### 7.4.1. Conclusions

Romsey has experienced substantive growth in the last 25 years, and is expected to continue to grow significantly in size of population in the next 25 years.

The Council's Social Planning Unit has produced a set of population projections for Romsey that predict a population of 5,095 at 2021 and 6,155 at 2031. These projections predict a decline in average household size from 3.07 persons per household in 2006 to 2.92 at 2021 and 2.85 at 2031. This indicates the need for a total of 1,746 households at 2021. At 2031 the total number of households is projected to be 2,156. The population and housing need projections and their implications for land supply/demand are further explored in Section 10. The tables in section 10.1 show the number of new dwellings required and the implications for land supply to meet this need.

It is recognised that all projected scenarios as well as other outcomes are possible and projections of the future are open to a range of influences. Consequently it will be necessary for Council to monitor population growth and trends over the coming Census years.

## 8. Key Issues

The review of key background documents, the planning scheme, particular State planning policy, and demographic profiles has identified the following key issues that influence the ODP's preparation:

1. Physical urban infrastructure
2. Transport & Movement
3. Heritage, Landscape & Township Character
4. Natural Environment
5. Commercial & Retail
6. Community & Open Space
7. Housing

These issues were discussed with the community during the consultation process and are explored in detail in the remainder of this section.



## 8.1 Physical urban infrastructure

Infrastructure in this context includes water, sewerage, electricity, telecommunications and other services.

Current infrastructure providers are:

- Water and Sewerage Authority: Western Water
- Electricity provider: Powercor Australia
- Telecommunications network provider: Telstra
- Drainage Authority: Council/Melbourne Water
- Reticulated gas service: SP AUSnet.
- Figure 8 illustrates existing physical infrastructure in the town, particularly the wastewater and water supply networks. This illustrates the general absence of wastewater services in the north-eastern area of the town.

### Planning Context

- Clause 11.03-4 of the SPPF discusses the need to provide physical infrastructure in an efficient, equitable, accessible and timely manner. Planning authorities should consider the use of development contributions (levies) in its funding. This can be achieved via a Development Contributions Plan and Overlay.

### 8.1.1. Issues

- The Macedon Ranges Water Resources Review identified a number of options available to meet the demands of the Romsey township. These included additional water through new bores and interconnections with other towns. Work on these options is continuing and will ensure that water supply will meet the demands of Romsey as the town grows. Romsey's water supply can also be supplemented by access to Melbourne's water supply.
- Western Water has advised that provision of water services is possible in all directions from Romsey, subject to further detailed assessment of existing water infrastructure. However growth in some directions would require sewerage pump stations which would incur high capital and maintenance costs. Areas affected by this constraint include land to the east of the town, north of the Romsey-Wallan Road; and land further south again from the residential growth areas proposed to the south of the town.
- A buffer zone is required around the Romsey Recycled Water Plant. Western Water's preference is to maintain a buffer of 1000m from the ponds at the plant with a minimum accepted buffer of 600m. It is noted that the south-eastern edge of the existing residential zone is partly within the preferred 1000m buffer.
- Western Water has advised that the Romsey Recycled Water Plant produces Class C water which is used for farming practices on site and provided to some agricultural customers in Romsey. There is potential for a further extension to new customers. The water is suitable for ovals, golf courses and agricultural uses. Council is exploring options for water reuse for recreation facilities.
- There are no known constraints to telephone services.
- Reticulated gas rollout to Romsey has recently been completed.
- Council commissioned Aurecon Australia to prepare a stormwater drainage study for Romsey. This study (s5.1) indicates that *"the stormwater network is generally still in good condition."*

However, it identifies a substantial need for upgrading of infrastructure that does not have the capacity to convey flows from a ten year storm event.

- Drainage problems exist in limited locations in the town. An open drain between Regan Drive and Gordon Crescent requires improvement. Any new development of residential land will need to ensure that drainage management around such problems are addressed.
- The existing residential area in the south east corner of the town can become very wet due to its flat profile. Melbourne Water have identified the area between White Avenue and Ewing Drive as likely to be subject to flooding in a 100 year storm event. They will be undertaking further research to assess the flood extent, but have indicated an intention to seek a planning scheme amendment that would apply an appropriate overlay to the area.
- Land adjacent to Five Mile Creek will be subject to flooding in a 100 year storm event, but the extent of inundation is not currently known. There is already a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay in the Planning Scheme for this area, however it does not encompass the full length of the Creek through the town and may no longer be accurate given likely changes to the hydrology of the area caused by subsequent subdivision in the Shaw Drive area.
- Within much of the existing Romsey township grassed swales provide for conveyance of stormwater runoff. These swales also provide stormwater treatment throughout the majority of the developed area. Based on assumptions made with respect to the existing swales, the Stormwater Drainage Study found that Romsey exceeded best practice targets (45%) for stormwater treatment with reductions in total nitrogen loads of 72%. This is also facilitated by the high proportion of permeable surface area in the town. The swales reduce the effective impervious area of Romsey, which in turn reduces the impact the development has on the receiving waterways through attenuation of peak flows and pollutant reduction. The Stormwater Drainage Study concludes that *“from this perspective, the Romsey Township drainage system is very ecologically sustainable.”* The Study recommends that water sensitive urban design such as the use of swales be continued in Romsey.
- Council Engineering Requirements for Infrastructure Construction now require new residential areas to provide urban standard infrastructure, such as kerb and channel, rather than soft standard such as swales. This reflects the often higher maintenance costs of ‘soft’ standards. However the policy requires further consideration given the outcomes of the Stormwater Drainage Study and state policy requirements. Decisions on infrastructure options also need to be considered in line with heritage and existing character attributes of the town.
- The electrical sub-station at Sunbury is the constraint to growth in the Macedon Ranges as this is the ‘gateway’ of electrical supply to the Shire. Simultaneous growth in towns, which the Sunbury sub-station supplies, will have a cumulative effect on its capacity. To address this issue additional services are proposed at New Gisborne, which will improve service reliability in Romsey.
- A substantial proportion of the existing urban area, in the north-east of the town (Stuartfield Ave and Bentley, Valley View and Dowie Courts), is not provided with wastewater services. It would be impractical to provide wastewater services to this area. Firstly, it cannot be serviced with gravity sewer. Furthermore, given that the area is already subdivided and developed with lots of 8-10,000m<sup>2</sup> it is unlikely that any future development would be able to meet the costs of servicing, which is likely to require acquisition of easements from third parties. Redevelopment of this area is not necessarily desirable in any case as it is generally not well connected to the town centre and has now established a rural residential character. The existing Residential 1 Zone is not appropriate for this unserviced land, which should be a Low Density Residential Zone. A possible exception is land adjoining Valley View Court and the Romsey-Wallan Road, which is traversed by an existing sewer and has good connection to the town centre.

## Implications for ODP

Rezone properties on Stuartfield Ave and Bentley and Dowie Courts from Residential 1 to Low Density Residential.

Contain residential development to the south of the town within the area able to be served by gravity sewerage reticulation.

Ongoing dialogue with Powercor to ensure future power supply needs for Macedon Ranges Shire are addressed.

Ensure new residential development does not encroach within the buffer zone of the Romsey Recycled Water Plant.

Explore the potential for water sensitive urban design and water reuse projects to address both water supply and stormwater management issues within Romsey.

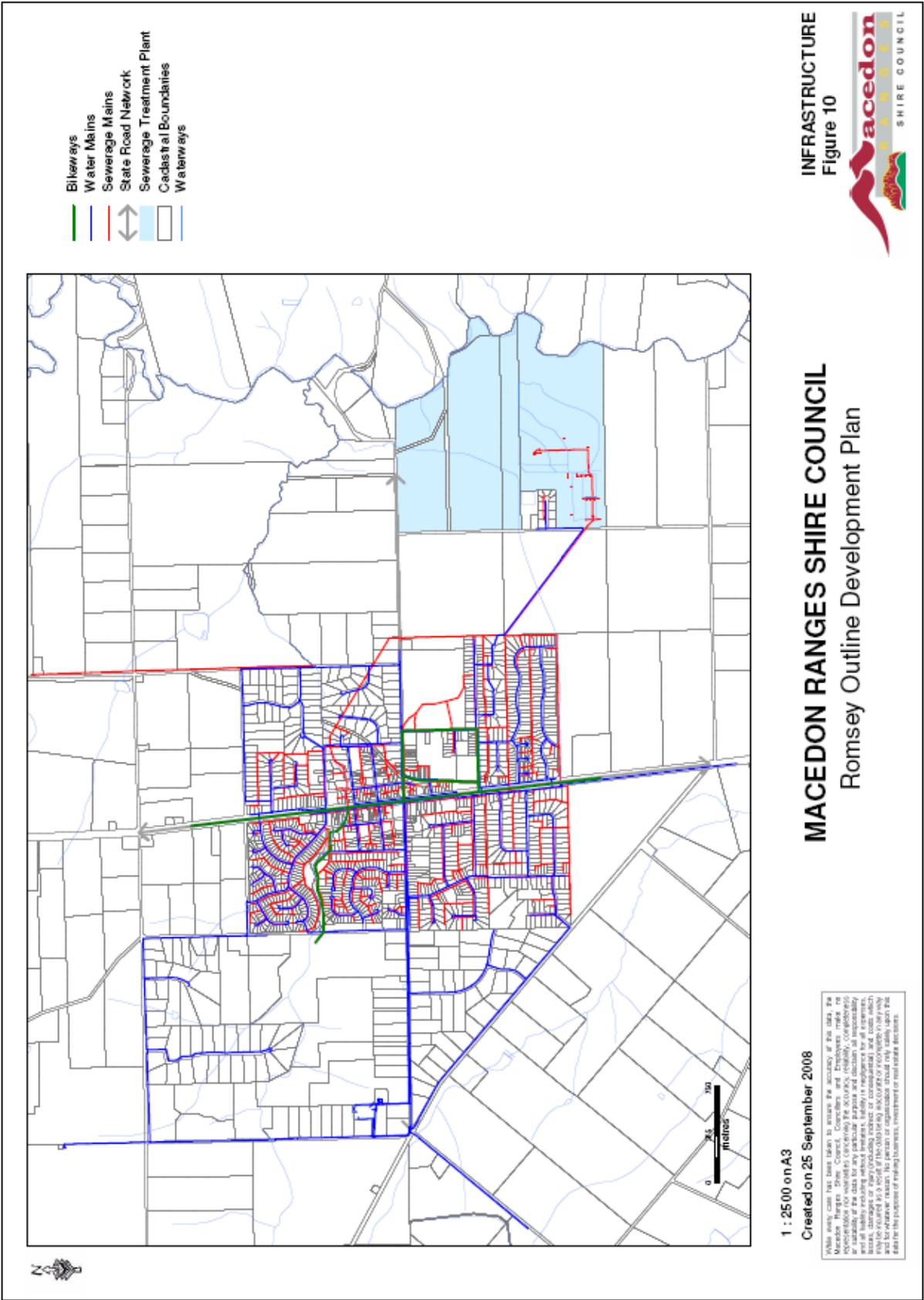
Implement high priority outcomes of the Romsey Drainage Study.

Update flood mapping and the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay in the vicinity of Five Mile Creek and between White Avenue and Ewing Drive.

Review Council engineering standards with a view to allowing use of swales and other water sensitive urban design techniques.

Determine appropriate developer contributions and apply through a Development Contributions Overlay.





**Figure 8**  
Existing Physical Urban Infrastructure

## 8.2 Transport & Movement

Melbourne-Lancefield Road and the Woodend-Wallan Road provide the primary movement corridors linking Romsey with Melbourne, the Calder and Hume Freeways and services in other centres.

Current infrastructure providers are:

- Major roads and local roads: VicRoads and Council
- Public Transport: Department of Transport

### Planning Context

Clause 12.08 of the SPPF seeks to create a more sustainable transport system by integrating land-use and transport. A Development Contributions Plan can address transport infrastructure provision in new developments, ensuring that new development provides the appropriate funding or infrastructure to ensure transport issues are appropriately managed. The same plan should require appropriate cycling and pedestrian links to be created or upgraded.

### 8.2.1. Issues

- Romsey has relatively poor access to transport infrastructure, with road access to Melbourne reliant on the two lane Melbourne-Lancefield Road.
- In terms of journey to work, more than 68% of workers drive a car (the highest proportion in the Shire, along with Gisborne), while just 1% walk and only 3% use public transport for at least part of their journey to work.
- Long distance commuting to employment is a feature of the eastern part of the Shire, including Romsey. The Romsey Statistical Local Area (SLA) includes the Lancefield, Riddells Creek and Darraweit Guim areas. This area has a particularly low level of job containment, with just 25% of jobs within the SLA and 33% within the Shire as a whole. This compares to 34% and 41% in the 'Balance' SLA containing Gisborne, Woodend and Macedon; and 59% and 69% in the Kyneton SLA. Other key employment locations for residents of the Romsey SLA are set out below:

Local Government Area	% of Total
Hume (C)	17.2%
Melbourne (C)	9.1%
VIC No Fixed Address	5.3%
Brimbank (C)	4.8%
Not stated	4.7%
Mitchell (S)	3.4%
Moonee Valley (C)	2.9%
Port Phillip (C)	1.5%
Whittlesea (C)	1.4%
Moreland (C)	1.4%
Wyndham (C)	1.4%
Darebin (C)	1.2%

**Figure 9: Key local government areas (outside Macedon Ranges) for employment of residents of the Romsey SLA (including Lancefield, Riddells Creek).**

Source: Urban Enterprise Ltd, Romsey Commercial Land Use Study, November 2009.

- The absence of a secondary school in Romsey means that every school day approximately 300 students need to be transported to other centres from the Romsey township alone.<sup>14</sup> Significant numbers of students are also transported from Lancefield and surrounding rural districts that would be better served by a secondary school in Romsey.
- Footpath provision is generally poor and there are a number of missing links to footpath connection. This can force residents to walk on the roadway, particularly people with prams, pushchairs or mobility scooters.



- The span of peak hours for commuting traffic is spread due to differing employment locations and differing hours of work. However, congestion is an issue on roads around the primary school at school drop-off and pick-up times.
- Bicycle facilities are generally poor with currently no significant provision of cycling facilities in road reserves or elsewhere.
- Residents rely heavily on motor vehicles both within and out of town, with very limited bus services to Sunbury per week for shoppers, to Riddells Creek to connect to the train on weekdays and daily services to Melbourne. Weekend services are very limited. There is no operative railway line in the area.
- Limited public transport services continue to impact on commuters, youth and the aged. This issue has been the focus of on-going work for several years and bus service improvements were introduced in late 2007. Growth in the non-driving 'population' is likely to continue to provide demand for the development of public transport options. Limitations on this service are also felt at times of higher petrol prices.
- While public transport, other than school bus services, is currently limited to the Melbourne-Lancefield Road, there is a need to 'future proof' new residential areas to ensure they can be provided with bus services into the future.

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<sup>14</sup> MRSC Social Planning 2009 population projections estimate the 2009 population of 10-14 year olds at 341, with 277 in the 15-19 age bracket.

- Consultants for the Council have recently completed the Romsey Movement Network Infrastructure Study. The Study recommends measures such as right turn lanes on the highway, provision of lighting at key crossing points, improvements to bus stops, new cycle lane connections, key footpath improvements and improvements to signage.
- Major issues raised by the Movement Study include the likely future need for a signalised intersection at Barry Street/Melbourne-Lancefield Road; and potential to upgrade Portingales and Greens Lanes as an alternative access between the industrial area and areas south of Romsey.

### Implications for ODP

Complete and implement the Romsey Movement Study. This should then inform a future Development Contributions Plan.

Work with education providers to promote establishment of a secondary school in Romsey.

Ensure pedestrian and bicycle networks are improved.

Ongoing development/improvement of the public transport system will be essential as the number of “non-drivers” continues to increase.

Work with service providers to develop bus stops to service the new development area along Melbourne–Lancefield Road initially, with potential for further penetration into residential areas in due course. Require that developers contribute to the cost of all public transport infrastructure construction that is necessitated by their development, including new bus stops and shelters along the Lancefield-Melbourne Road

Apply the Development Plan Overlay to greenfield growth areas to ensure a well connected network of streets, footpaths and cycleways are provided across all areas. Provide road layouts that can accommodate public transport that would be able to stop within easy walking distance of all lots and move quickly and easily through the estate.

Indicate the likely future need for a signalised intersection at Barry Street/Melbourne-Lancefield Road and investigate upgrading Portingales and Greens Lanes to provide alternative access between the industrial area and areas to the south of Romsey

## 8.3 Heritage, Landscape & Township Character

With a combination of heritage buildings and places, significant landscapes (eg Five Mile Creek), heritage landscapes (eg exotic wind rows) Romsey has retained a historic township appearance and an open rural character. The surrounding rural landscape around Romsey is highly valued by residents; including the open rural setting between Romsey and Lancefield.

### Planning Context

SPPF Clauses 11.03 and 12.05 reiterate the need to create environments that have an easily recognisable sense of place and cultural identity and encourage development that emphasises existing cultural heritage values, attractive built form and landscape character.

Figure 10 illustrates the Romsey Heritage Precinct that has been identified through the Macedon Ranges Shire Council Heritage Review 2008. This study has also identified a number of additional sites in the town that have historic value.

### 8.3.1. Issues



#### Romsey Town Centre

- Protection of heritage buildings and assets.
- Retaining the 19<sup>th</sup> Century rectilinear grid form
- Protection and enhancement of the character of Main Street
- Promotion of verandahs for weather protection.
- Conservation of significant street trees and private trees
- Recognition of the existing village scale of development
- Promote building to property lines on Main Street

#### Township entrances and landscape character

- Management of the removal and replacement of established trees and ensuring that new development adds to the established landscape character of an area.
  - Protection/creation of quality visual landscapes at town entrances.
- Retention of clearly delineated edges between the town and rural areas.
  - Protection of the rural landscape from the town edges, particularly the open rural setting between Romsey and Lancefield.

### Five Mile Creek

- The Five Mile Creek waterway represents a significant potential corridor for indigenous cultural heritage sites and any development in this area needs to be cognisant of this. Development near the Creek may trigger specific requirements under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. In particular, subdivisions or unit developments creating 3 or more dwellings are likely to require preparation of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan.
- Maintenance and enhancement of the landscape/open space corridor of Five Mile Creek through Romsey as an essential element of the township's character. Investigate opportunities on the eastern side of Main Street.

### Siting, design and built form

- Controlling building design to manage the scale, siting and design of new buildings, particularly within the town centre and established township areas.
- Ensure that new development is responsive to the environment, whether that is built form or natural environment



### Implications for ODP

Prepare an Urban Design Framework or alternative design guidance for the Romsey Town Centre.

Ensure the scale and form of development complements the existing town and heritage character.

Establish design guidelines for development on key sites and at town entrances.

Provide for the protection of Romsey's heritage buildings and assets, as identified in the draft Macedon Ranges Shire Council Heritage Review 2008, through appropriate heritage controls.

Establish landscape and tree management programs. Improve the appearance of the southern and eastern township entrances through landscaping.

Explore opportunities for shared walking/biking paths along Five Mile Creek corridor. Acquire land adjoining Five Mile Creek when opportunities arise. Ensure that developers of land within 250 metres the Creek are aware of requirements under the Aboriginal heritage Act 2006.

Maintain a 'clearly delineated edge' between agricultural land and urban development.

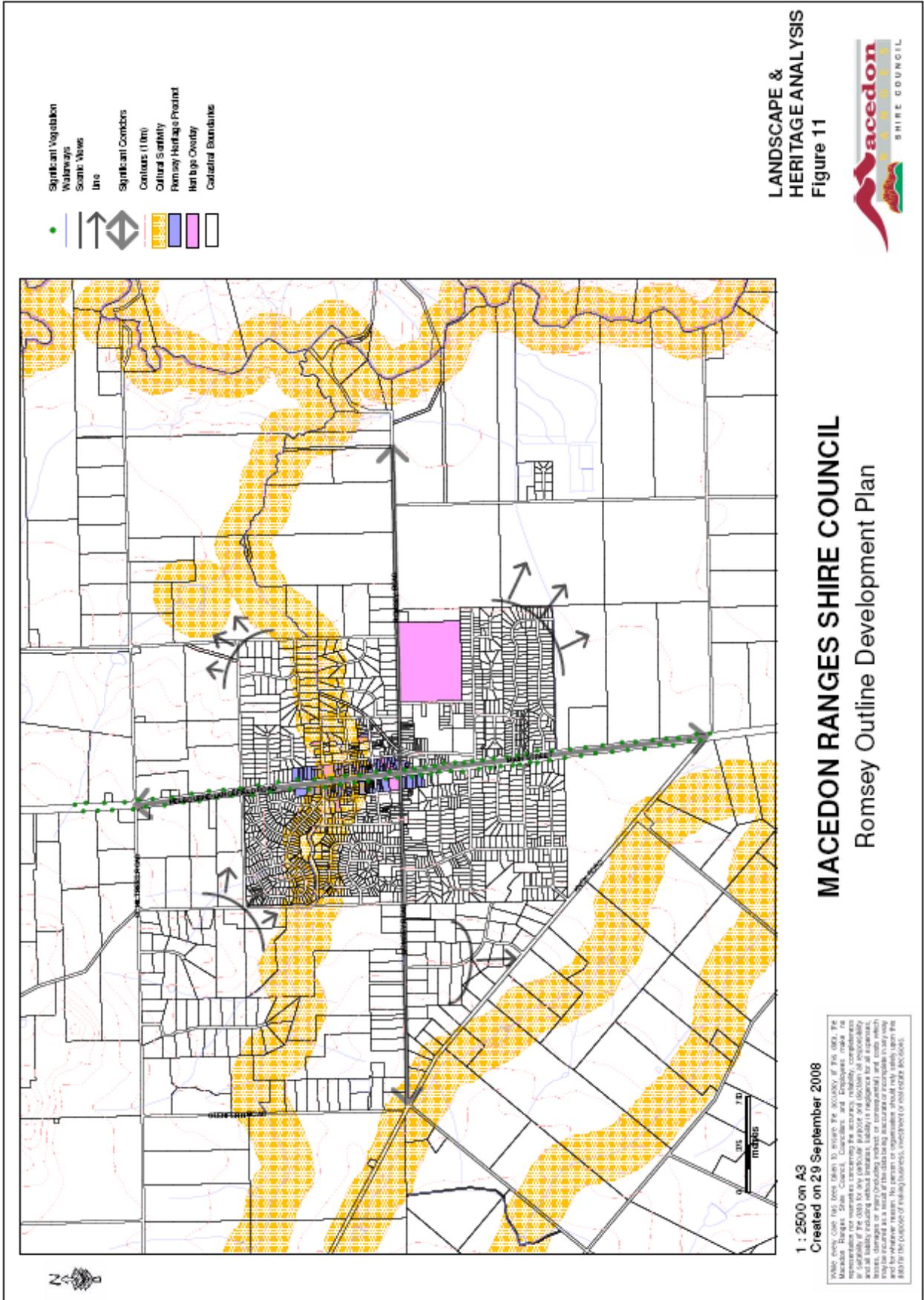


Figure 10: Landscape and Heritage Analysis

## 8.4 Natural Environment

Key features of the natural environment in and around Romsey are:

- Five Mile Creek as the primary (albeit ephemeral) waterway through Romsey.
- Mature native and exotic vegetation on the larger lots that are commonly found in the town.
- Good quality agricultural land in surrounding rural areas.

These features contribute to the character of the township, the Shire's natural resources and provide challenges and opportunities for future development.

### Planning Context

Clause 11.03-2 of the SPPF identifies the need to contribute to the protection of air, land and water quality and the conservation of natural ecosystems, resources, energy and cultural heritage.

Local Planning Policies can provide guidelines related to catchment management and water quality protection, erosion control, vegetation protection & enhancement and soil removal, to ensure that new development is responsive to identified environmental issues. In addition, Council has a number of overlays that can be applied, to assist in the protection and enhancement of Romsey's natural environment these include the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO); Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO); Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO); Erosion Management Overlay (EMO); Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO); Wildfire Management Overlay (WMO); Design and Development Overlay (DDO); Floodway Overlay (FO); and the Salinity Management Overlay (SMO).

There are no areas identified within the Romsey town area which are considered to be of regional environmental significance.

### 8.4.1. Issues

- Managing the growth of the township area to ensure that the environmental values of the area are conserved and enhanced, including maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and protection of waterways.
- Before European colonisation, the primary ecosystem type in the vicinity of Romsey was Plains Grassy Woodland. This vegetation has now been almost entirely removed. The broad scale map at Figure 11 illustrates the general absence of remnant native vegetation in the area.
- Parts of the township are relatively low lying and subject to flooding during heavy rainfall around the Five Mile Creek.
- Land around Romsey is generally of good quality for agricultural purposes. Land to the north is generally considered to have the higher agricultural value.
- Like much of the Shire, the subdivision pattern in some of the surrounding rural area, particularly to the west, is quite fragmented.

### Implications for ODP

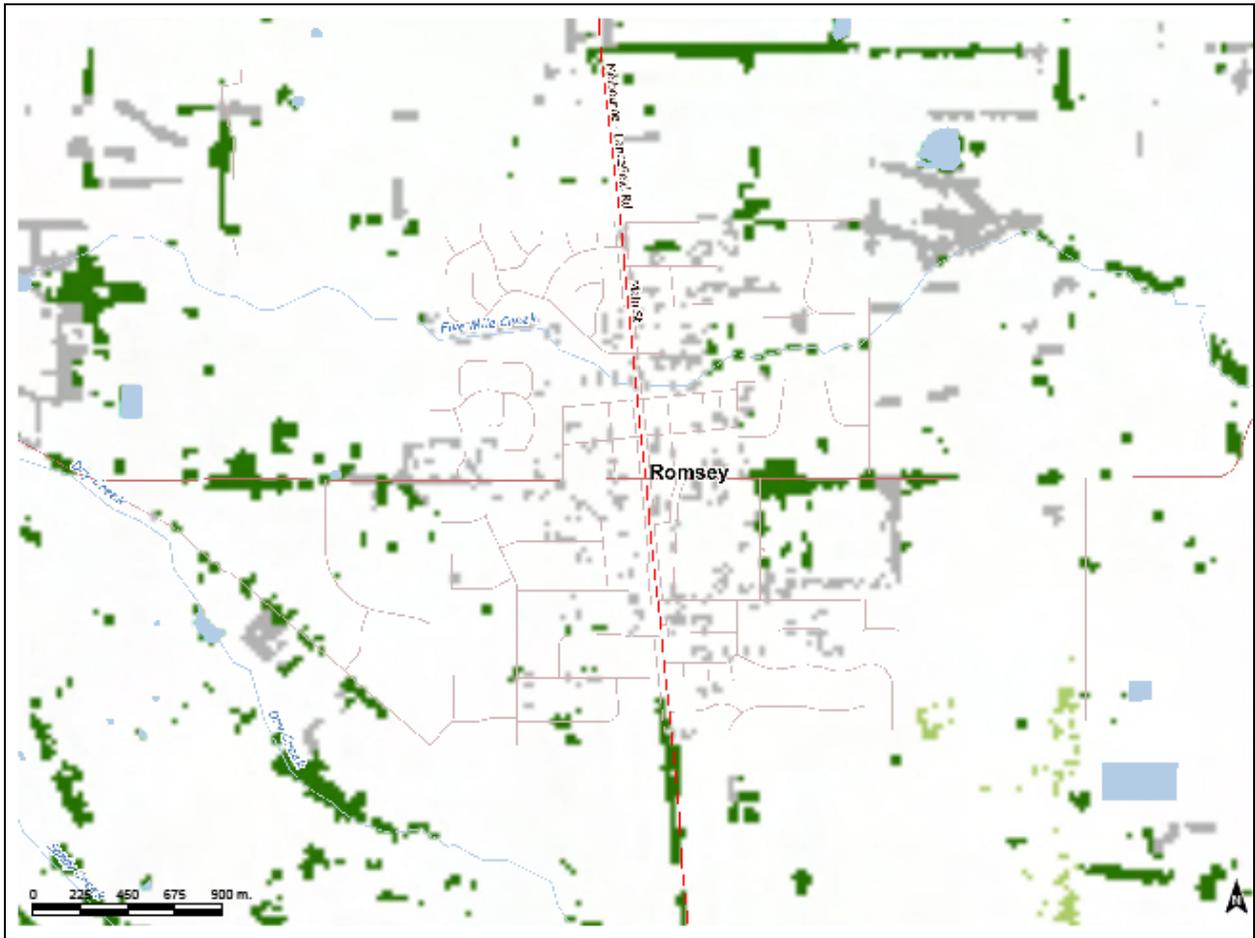
Identify Ecological Vegetation Classes, waterways and sites of cultural significance which require further investigation prior to rezoning and subdivision.

Promote restoration of vegetation consistent with original ecosystem types (typically Plains Grassy Woodland).

Limit further development of land with agricultural values to minimise further fragmentation and potential land use conflicts.

Enhance waterway character and quality through adoption of water sensitive urban design.





**Figure 11: Natural Environment – estimated vegetation extent**  
Source: Department of Sustainability and Environment interactive maps

## 8.5 Commercial, Retail & Industry

Romsey provides one of the municipality's secondary economic centres, along with Woodend. To the west Kyneton and Gisborne provide the higher order services within the municipality.

Proximity to Melbourne is an advantage as it allows local business good access to markets, ports, airports and road networks. It also means that Romsey tends to attract a commuter population where local residents travel outside the municipality for employment, education, retail and recreational pursuits.

Romsey is located within the Macedon Ranges Spa Country, a well-recognised tourism region of Victoria. Around Romsey are some new and well established wineries which produce high quality wines including Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and premium sparkling wines. The wineries are a major aspect of tourism in the Macedon Ranges Wine Region and contribute to the economic health of the Shire and its towns. There are also many agricultural activities such as cropping, grazing and horse training occurring near Romsey that contribute to the Shire's agricultural production values.

Having a sound local economy will provide a sustainable basis for any growth that will be experienced by the community in the future.

Gaming has been a topical issue in the Romsey Community and this is still under review. Council is separately advancing a planning scheme policy to address this matter – Amendment C64 has been authorised by the Minister and is now being prepared for public exhibition.

The description of issues in this section of the ODP is generally based on analysis of commercial land supply and demand by Tim Nott Economic Analysis and Strategy (February 2009), except where otherwise referenced.

### Planning Context

Employment/economic development and tourism opportunities and hierarchies are discussed at Clauses 11.03-5 and 21.07-5 of the Planning Scheme.

Local planning policies can be introduced into the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme to encourage sustainable urban design and to promote a high standard of built form. This can relate to tourism development as well as commercial and industrial development. Land can be appropriately zoned for business and industrial purposes to encourage the appropriate location of commercial uses. Potentially appropriate zones include Business 1 and 4 Zones and Industrial 1, 2 and 3.

### 8.5.1. Issues

- There is opportunity to promote local employment opportunities further in Romsey and the Macedon Ranges Shire generally. The Romsey Statistical Local Area (SLA) includes the surrounding Riddells Creek, Lancefield and the Darraweit Guim areas. This area has just 25% job containment within its boundary and 33% within the Shire.<sup>15</sup> This is significantly lower than other peri-urban areas.
- Given that there is limited supply of industrial land in the eastern part of the Shire, there is opportunity for Romsey to play a greater role in the provision of local employment opportunities. Land in Romsey should support employment opportunities for a proportion of the Shire's rural resident population and for its own growing population.

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<sup>15</sup> Urban Enterprise, Romsey Commercial Land Use Study, November 2009.

- It is proposed that the Council aim for 45% job containment within the SLA in order to develop the local economy, provide a greater range of local employment opportunities and reduce the level of long distance commuting.
- There is significant escape expenditure for weekly shopping, bulky goods spending particularly home furnishings, renovation and entertainment. The town has had limited new businesses develop in the last five years and has very little zoned land available to accommodate new industry.
- Approximately 64% of spending “escapes” from the trade area to shops elsewhere. In particular, spending by trade area residents flows to larger supermarket centres and centres that specialise in comparison goods shopping such as Sunbury and the regional shopping centres of Melbourne. This level of escape spending is within the normal range; areas with neighbourhood shopping centres such as Romsey usually retain between 30% and 40% of the retail spending of their residents. However, the usual role of neighbourhood centres is to provide convenience retailing, especially food and groceries. Other small town and neighbourhood centres often supply 50% to 75% of their local residents’ requirements for food and groceries (and this compares with only 43% supplied by the Romsey trade area). This would indicate that the Romsey area is under-provided in food and grocery retailing. In particular, the three supermarkets in Romsey and Lancefield are small and do not stock a full range of goods.
- Retail spending by residents of the Romsey main trade area is forecast to grow from \$77 million in 2008 to \$151 million in 2031, a growth of \$74 million. A proportion of this spending will be made in Romsey. The provision of a larger supermarket in Romsey could reduce escape spending in the trade area but would be likely to require some reorganisation of the local food and grocery sector.
- It is important to understand the needs of the tourism industry and the potential for land use conflicts.
- There is a need to encourage high quality design and built form outcomes that complement streetscape character and significant views and do not detract from residential amenity.
- It is important to strengthen the existing business core and maintenance of the compact and walkable business precinct.

Spending, sales and escape expenditure, Romsey Main Trade Area, 2008							
Retail Category	Current sales	Sales to visitors		Sales to residents	Total resident spending	Escape spending	
	\$m	%	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	%
Food and groceries	\$15.8	5%	\$0.8	\$15.0	\$35.2	\$20.2	57%
Household goods	\$4.6	10%	\$0.5	\$4.1	\$13.3	\$9.2	69%
Other goods	\$5.0	10%	\$0.5	\$4.5	\$17.6	\$13.1	74%
Food service	\$4.2	15%	\$0.6	\$3.6	\$9.3	\$5.7	61%
Retail services	\$1.1	5%	\$0.1	\$1.0	\$1.9	\$0.9	48%
Total retail spending	\$30.6	8%	\$2.4	\$28.1	\$77.2	\$49.1	64%

**Table 5: Spending in the Romsey Main Trade Area**

Source: Romsey Commercial Assessment, Tim Nott Economic Analysis and Strategy, February 2009.

- Romsey has the second largest number of residents in Macedon Ranges Shire who are employed in businesses that require industrial land, including construction, manufacturing, mining, transport, wholesale trade and other service businesses (713 jobs).

- Romsey has only 13.3 hectares of industrial land - 4% of the Shire's industrial land stocks and 6% of industrial activity.<sup>16</sup>



### Implications for ODP

Ensure that there is sufficient and well-located business and industrial land to accommodate the expected growth of the Romsey township population and cater for an expanded role as the primary commercial centre in the east of the Shire.

Facilitate expansion of the town centre into the existing Business 1 Zone land around Pohlman Street and adjoining areas to the south on the Melbourne-Lancefield Road.

Apply the Design and Development Overlay to the proposed industrial and commercial area fronting the Melbourne-Lancefield Road, north of Greens lane, in order to manage built form outcomes and the gateway experience of Romsey.

Apply a Development Contributions Plan Overlay and a Development Plan Overlay to greenfield commercial and industrial areas.

<sup>16</sup> Urban Enterprise, Romsey Commercial Land Use Study, November 2009, pages 17, 18.

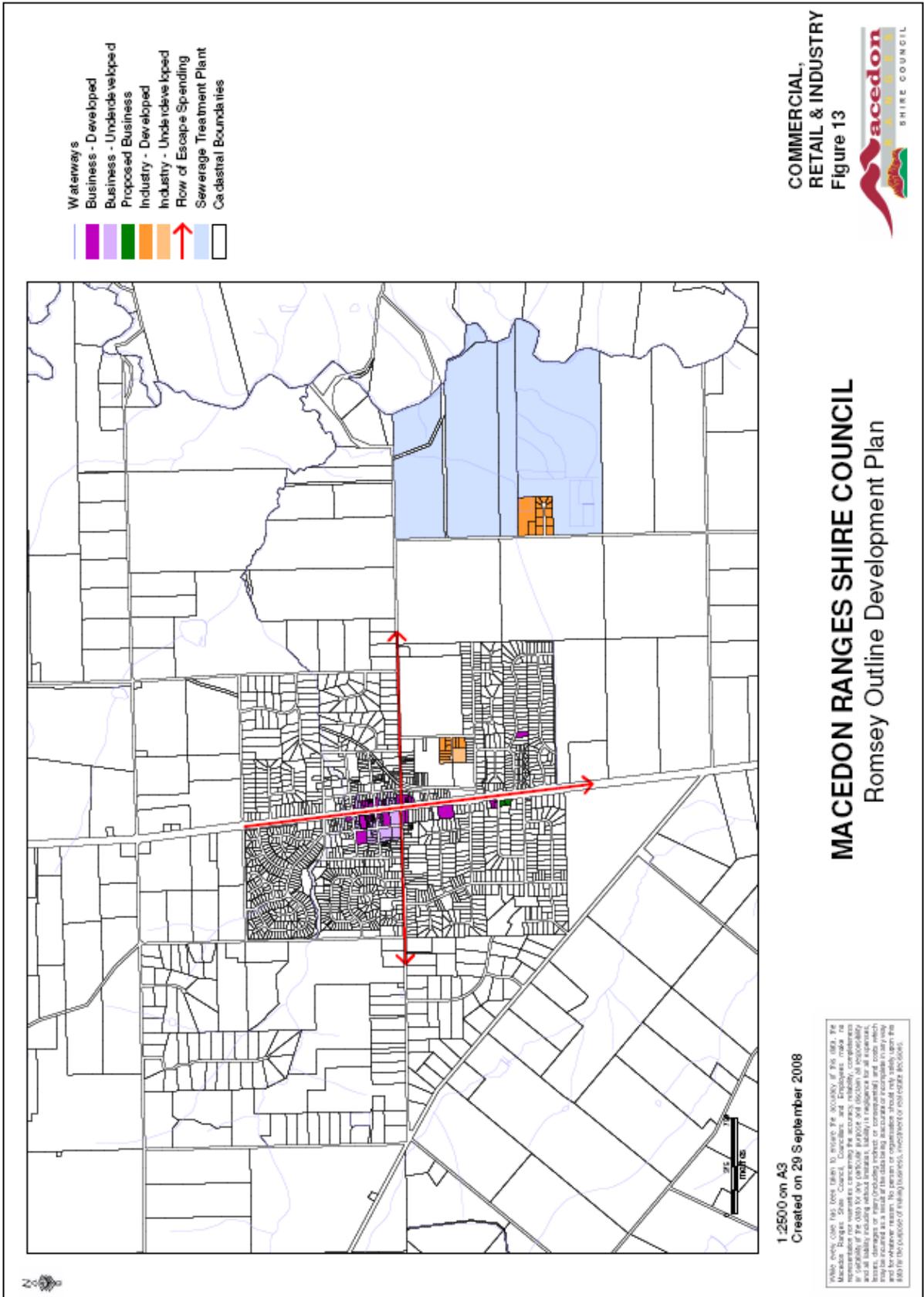


Figure 12: Existing business and industrial zoning and development

## 8.6 Community & Open Space

One of the town's defining characteristics is its network of open spaces, particularly the Five Mile Creek linear park and sporting reserves.

A Primary school is located on White Avenue, however the town's secondary students attend school at Kyneton, Gisborne, Mount Macedon or outside the Shire.

As development increases there will be additional pressure on existing open space, educational institutions and community infrastructure. Additional local parks, linear links and possibly active recreational facilities will be required to service new development. Additional community facilities and extension of school facilities may also be required.

The town is serviced by a police station, CFA, SES and Ambulance Service. These services are critical to the safety of the area and in the case of fire services rely on local involvement to make the service possible.

### Planning Context

Community and Open Space feature strongly in Clause 12 of the SPPF, the LPPF (eg Romsey Township 22.02-6) and the Particular Provisions (ie Public Open Space Contribution and ResCode).

The Development Contributions Plan Overlay can address the equitable provision of open space, educational facilities and community infrastructure in relation to new development and provide for levying of contributions for the provisions of works, services and facilities before development can commence.

The Open Space Strategy (1999) provides an inventory of all open space areas within the Shire (currently under review). It recognises trends in the use of open space areas, lists priority actions for existing reserves and identifies areas where additional public open space should be required as part of future development.

### 8.6.1. Issues

- Improving the existing cycle/pedestrian network to connect development with the Five Mile Creek environs
- Ensuring compliance with the principles of safety through urban design in the development of linear links to avoid issues of poor surveillance.
- Increased development in Romsey will create demand for additional educational facilities and community infrastructure. It may be appropriate to provide for these facilities in existing residential areas rather than business zones or on the urban periphery.
- Address the need for additional active open space facilities in areas of increased development in Romsey and growth areas to the south of the township.
- Ensuring open space areas are fronted by road to provide an active frontage and adequate surveillance, as well as access for all by providing appropriate disability access.
- New public open space will be required in the new development areas. The provision and location of open space requires detailed consideration in finalisation of the ODP and preparation of Development Plans for these new areas. Precincts and land parcels that do not have open space shown will need to make an open space cash-in-lieu contribution to fund the acquisition and development of designated spaces. Additional land may be required where drainage and/or environment protection is to be facilitated. The new areas of open space proposed will require proper long term management ultimately by Council once established.

- Ensuring that new subdivisions provide 5% of the land for open space and that new local parks are well developed and landscaped.
- Designated open space will be developed in accordance with Council's and the developer's vision. Most new open space is passive and will accommodate appropriate pedestrian and cycle paths.

### **Aged Persons**

Council's projections: "*Older People Service Needs Projections*" at June 2006, calculated that the following aged services would be required for Romsey residents by 2030:

- 28 nursing home places – growing from an estimated need of 7 places in 2006.
- Aged Hostel places are expected to increase from about 9 places in 2006 to 33 places in 2001 with demand increasing more strongly from 2016;
- Provision of Commonwealth Aged Care packages are projected to increase slowly from 2 in 2006 to 8 in 2030.

These future services needs are currently unmet within the town. The figures should be considered indicative only as they have not been revised in the light of revised population projections.

### **Children and Young Person Services**

While the percentage of children (between 0-14 years) is expected to decrease from 27% of the 2006 population to 23% of the 2031 population there will still be a substantial increase in these age groups of about 480 children.<sup>17</sup>

The proportion of young people (15-24 years) will decline only marginally from 12% to 11% of the total population; and will increase in actual numbers from 433 young people in 2006 to 666 young people in 2031.

The impact of these changes are:

- Steady increase in the need for child care places: long day care and family day care places
- Kindergarten places are expected to increase.
- Secondary school places are projected to continue to increase over time.

It is expected that the existing primary school will be able to cater for the increased growth. The Department of Education have advised that they do not anticipate providing a secondary school in Romsey in the foreseeable future. However, demand already exists in the community for a regional secondary school in the town and this could be accommodated on the existing primary school site. The likely increase in secondary school numbers might not warrant a secondary school in a metropolitan context, but decisions on this issue should recognise the value of a secondary school in developing a sense of community, promoting local employment and more sustainable transport patterns.

The development of extra child care places will need to be facilitated. Child care centres can be provided within the Residential 1 Zone, subject to a permit.

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<sup>17</sup> MRSC Social Planning Unit population projections, February 2009.

## Implications for ODP

Ensure pedestrian and bicycle networks are improved and form key components of the ODP.

Provide an open space network based on protection of natural and landscape features and equitable access. Ensure that new parks are provided with appropriate facilities and landscaping to create an attractive environment for users.

Redevelop and expand sporting facilities in the Romsey Park and Primary School precinct, including use of recycled water where practicable.

The development of centres to meet aged persons needs, preferably within proximity to the town centre and town park, should be supported by Council to allow people to age in a familiar surrounding and retain their social connections.

Support childcare centre proposals where located close to the town centre.

Work with education providers to promote the establishment of a secondary school in Romsey.

Provide 'safe' urban design outcomes including ensuring fire access is possible and emergency services can operate efficiently.

Assess additional community and open space requirements.



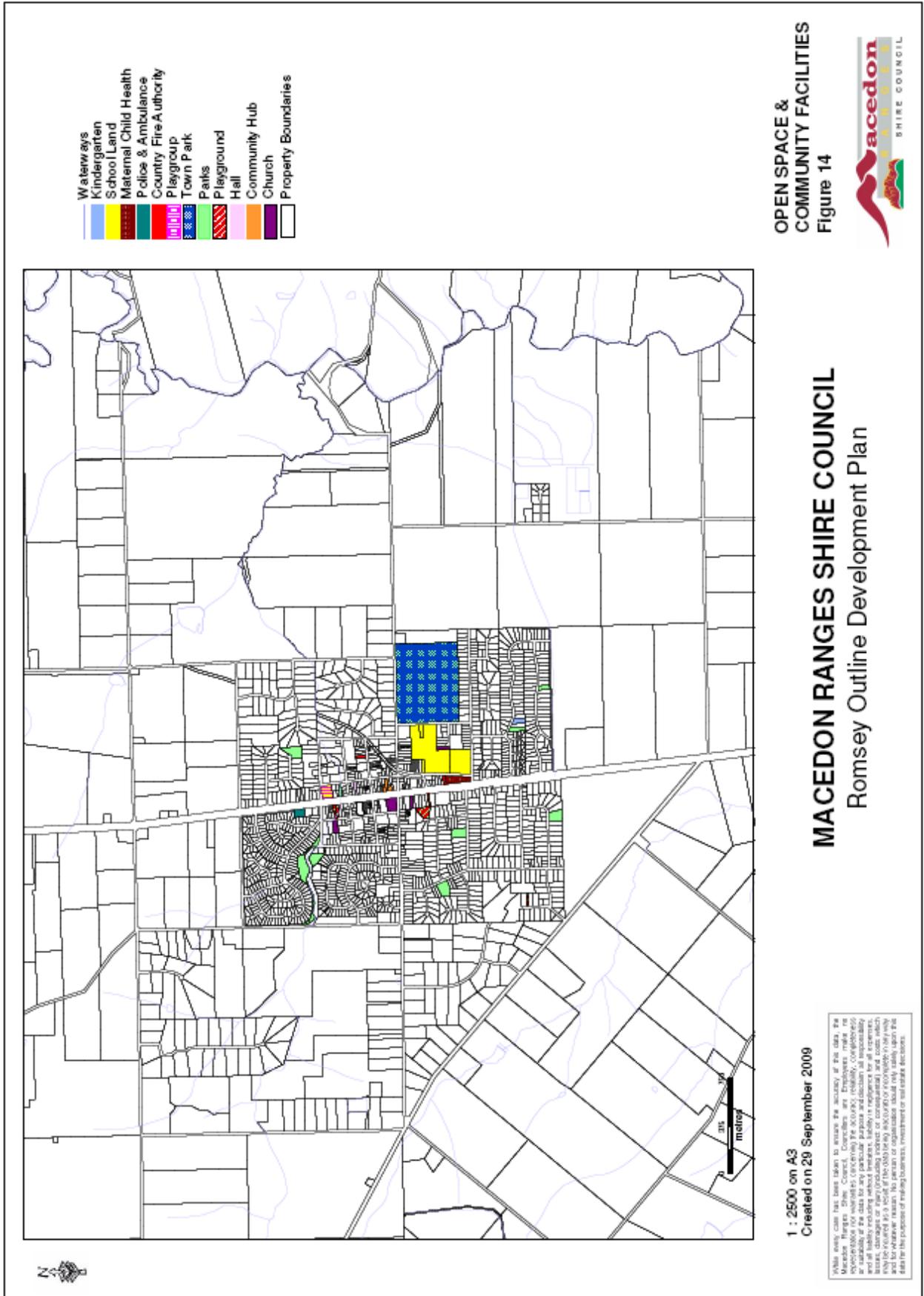


Figure 13: Existing Open Space and Community Facilities

## 8.7 Housing

Traditionally, the housing styles and densities in the township area have been characterised by a typical rural town core of “town lots” of around 800–1200m<sup>2</sup> (1/4 acre), with the surrounding area comprising larger low density allotments of 2000–4000 m<sup>2</sup> lots (1/2 – 1 acre) leading out to the more rural residential land on the fringe of the town.

Recent developments have seen growth in more conventional subdivisions on the outskirts of the town. Conventional subdivision development proposals have generally not been well received by existing residents due to the proposals often resulting in a more intensive development form than the existing surrounding area.

Market demand has led to some ‘medium density’ style unit developments within the established areas of town, which have generated debate about appropriate development and neighbourhood character. An analysis of housing styles and densities within the township area indicates that the style of development is not typically conventional suburban, but more consistent with that of an established rural lifestyle township, with mixed lot sizes throughout the town and established gardens and semi-rural style homes.

The link between residential forms, lifestyle preference and community wellbeing cannot be overstated in Romsey. Residents frequently express strongly the desire for a non-suburban community. Wide road reserves (20m) and soft engineering techniques to address road construction and drainage works provide a rural open feel to the township’s residential areas.

There is a need to ensure that future dwelling provision meets the changing demographic profile of the community. Consequently this document seeks an increase in small lot or medium density housing development. This is expected to meet projected needs expressed in Council’s Housing Strategy, 2007. Accessibility, affordability and flexibility in the housing stock are critical.

### Planning Context

Clauses 11.03-1 and 12.01 of the SPPF discuss the need to facilitate sustainable development that takes full advantage of existing settlement patterns and investment in transport and communication, water and sewerage and social facilities.

The Residential 1 zone, Low Density Residential Zone (minimum lot area 0.4ha), Mixed Use Zone and Rural Living Zones are the key zones that can be used to allow for residential and rural residential development within and around towns. Victoria’s residential zones are currently under review and in the future this may provide more flexibility in dealing with variations between areas.

### 8.7.1. Issues

- Current Residential 1 zoned land within the township area is not afforded any additional control to protect the distinct character and residential densities of existing areas, beyond that provided by ResCode. A strong residential character exists in some areas and needs to be defined in further strategic work including a town character analysis.
- Residential areas within the township boundary that are un-sewered and developed at a low density scale should be considered for rezoning to the Low Density Residential Zone.
- Transitioning from town to rural densities needs to be managed to provide appropriate interfaces between various housing styles and lot sizes. This has historically been accommodated within the town boundary.
- Higher densities of development should be encouraged to locate within 200-300m of the Romsey town centre, close to existing facilities and services. New medium density development needs to

be controlled and designed to respect existing town character, and provide a response that adds positively to the streetscape values and servicing/infrastructure capacities of the town.

- Certain areas of the town exhibit existing densities and characters that should be recognised through appropriate planning scheme controls to ensure that development in adjoining areas respects existing development, housing styles and densities particularly to retain the visual quality of the town from major through routes.
- Planning should aim for at least 97 additional medium density dwellings in the period to 2021 to enable choice and help satisfy the estimated increase in single person households, especially those that are entering old age. This would equate to 15% of new housing stock being medium density - up from the current inadequate provision of only 4% of housing stock.



- New residential zoned land presents an opportunity to contribute to a greater mix of housing styles and choices, based on a performance approach to subdivision. Such new development will have minimal impact on existing residents and residential areas. A range of housing styles and densities appropriate to the population and demographics of the area should be planned for, and appropriate areas for certain styles of development be nominated to give clarity to Council's expectations.
- The appropriate scale of development in new residential areas is a contentious issue. In calculating land demand and supply it is necessary to anticipate an average lot size and the draft ODP released in October 2008 anticipated average lot sizes in greenfield residential areas of 750m<sup>2</sup>. This met some community resistance, including arguments such as:
  - 750m<sup>2</sup> is much smaller than any current broad scale subdivision in Romsey and is therefore inconsistent with the character of the town, where lot sizes are typically a minimum of 1500m<sup>2</sup>, even in recent subdivisions.
  - 750m<sup>2</sup> lots would result in the densest development at the edge of the town rather than close to the town centre.

It is considered that lots need to be smaller than has been the past practice in Romsey in order to provide for efficient development and housing diversity. However there is a good case for development at a slightly larger scale than 750m<sup>2</sup>. Existing residential areas in the south of the town, immediately adjoining the proposed growth areas, have much larger lot sizes. Typically

they are around 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> to the west of the highway and 2,500-3,500m<sup>2</sup> to the east. From a sustainability perspective there is little to be gained from providing housing density on the periphery, with poor access to services. The focus in terms of density needs to be placed on the provision of medium density housing around the town centre. This issue may be investigated further as part of the character analysis.

- The subdivision in the area to the south of Kathryn Street provides a precedent for 900m<sup>2</sup> lots. It is considered appropriate to plan for further development at this scale, recognising that this is an anticipated average and that a diversity may be desirable.
- There are a number of existing Development Plan Overlays (DPO) applying to Romsey. Generally however the overlay that applies is the DPO1, which was designed to apply to Gisborne and has a finite lifespan, expiring on 30 June 2011. Some of the DPO1 areas have now been developed and the DPO may no longer be necessary or appropriate.
- The other existing DPO applying to the urban area is the DPO9, applying to land on the southern edge of the town, east of the highway. This will effectively be superseded by the rezoning of this area for residential growth.
- There is an area south of Barry Street and east of Metcalf Road that has a series of very deep lots extending approximately 180 metres back from Barry Street. An area of approximately 5.5 ha is held in a total of 9 lots and contains approximately 8 dwellings. This area is in close proximity to the town centre and presents obvious development opportunities, with a number of subdivision proposals put forward for individual parcels. The subdivision permits that have been issued have attempted to safeguard the potential for the area to be developed in an efficient and co-ordinated manner, but a DPO would facilitate this more effectively.
- Landholdings to the south of Romsey are large and it will not be possible to align rezonings with property boundaries. Where landholdings are partially rezoned to Residential 1, the remainder of the land may need to be rezoned also, if that land could not be excised in accordance with subdivision requirements of the operative zone. This is expected to apply only to the Dyer property at 2662 Main Road.

### **Residential character analysis**

While a detailed town character analysis needs to be prepared in order to determine appropriate design controls that will maintain and enhance the character of the town, a preliminary analysis of residential character has been undertaken. Consistent character elements include:

- Generally straight, wide streets, without kerb and channel drainage, often supporting regenerating native trees and sometimes with landscape planting;
- General absence of front fencing;
- Large front setbacks;
- Substantial side setbacks;
- Almost uniformly single storey development, with only very occasional two storey houses.

The most common elements that undermine this valued character in some areas are:

- Houses on corner sites with high, solid side fences and less commonly front fences.
- High, solid front or side fences forward of the dwelling on regular blocks.
- Carports or garages forward of the dwelling.
- Houses oriented across the block can dominate the streetscape even with a large front setback
- White or bright coloured building elements.

- A cluttering of development on irregular shaped lots at the end of cul de sacs.
- Two storey development is uncommon and is not necessarily obtrusive, but can be highly incongruous where located on corner sites, in reasonably close proximity to a road boundary.

### Implications for ODP

Encourage the development of a variety of lot sizes and types, including the provision of medium density housing in areas located with good access to commercial, transport and other infrastructure and that do not impact on heritage streetscapes or buildings.

Aim to provide 15% of new dwellings in the form of medium density housing, predominantly within the preferred area identified on the structure plan.

Consider the meaning of 'medium density' housing in the context of Romsey, versus metropolitan Melbourne and ensure a mix of opportunities to meet relevant needs without compromising key characteristics of the town.

Develop a Romsey specific DPO that can be applied to residential areas in place of the current DPO1 and 9.

Apply the DPO to greenfield residential areas to promote co-ordinated development between areas. Apply the DPO also to partly undeveloped areas south of Barry Street and east of Metcalf Road.

Consider removing existing DPOs over areas that have already been fully or partially developed, in the vicinity of Murphy and Wrixon Streets; Barry Street/Couzens Lane; and on the south side of Hutchinsons Lane, west of Stuartfield Ave.

Ensure that all residential development respects the key character elements of the town. Design principles are proposed in the ODP section 12 and a more detailed assessment of two areas is provided in Section 3 of the Appendices.

Prepare a town character study to confirm the important character elements and develop design controls. Measures to control design in order to protect character will need to ensure that medium density housing can be provided in the preferred area, if controls are to apply in these areas.

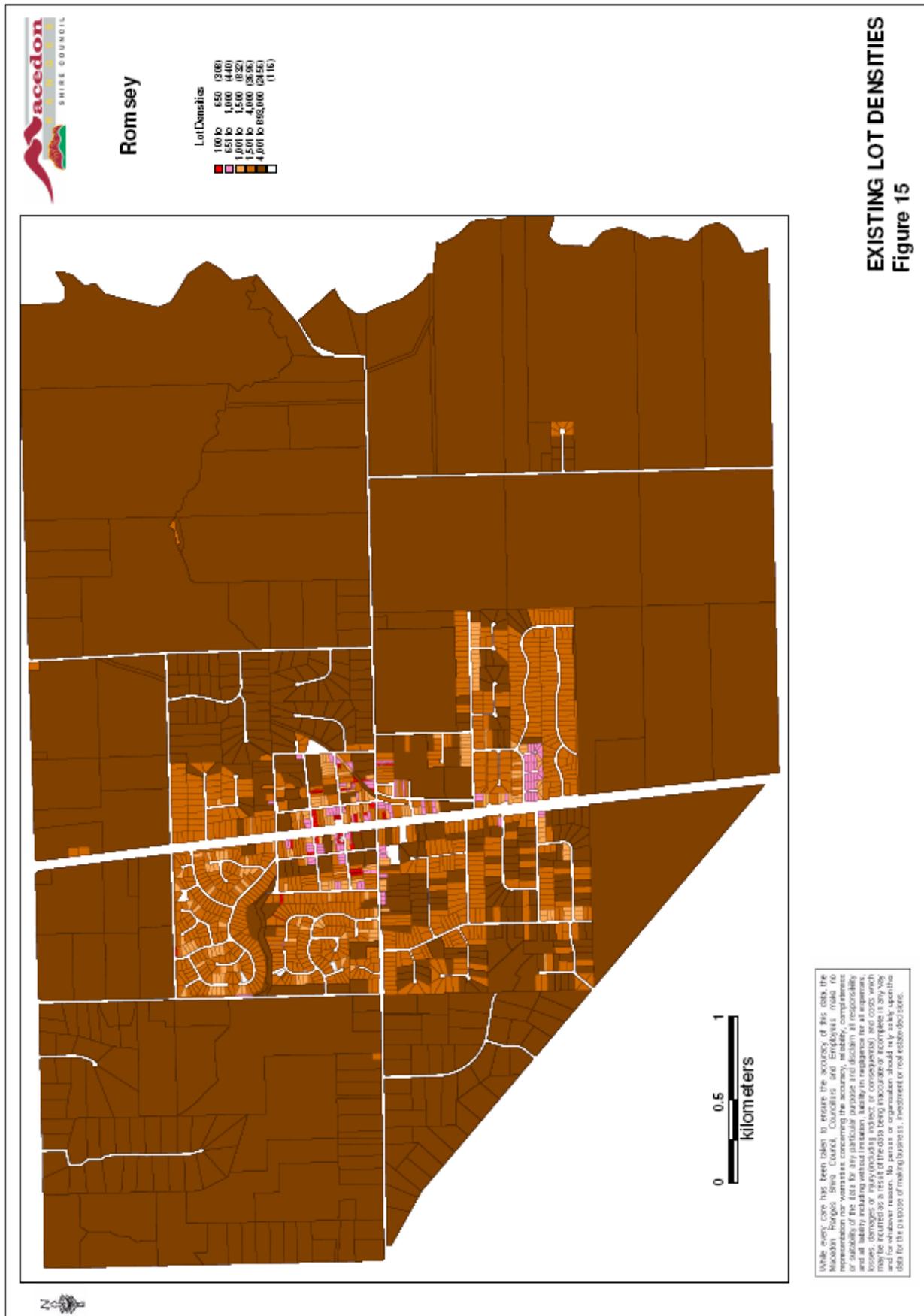
Allow appropriate development in landscape and heritage sensitive areas.

Rezoning of the Dyer property at 2662 Main Road should allow for an appropriate practical boundary between an area of Residential 1 Zone to the north and a balance area of Rural Living to the south. The zoning schedule of the Rural Living balance may need to be changed to allow that land to be excised in accordance with subdivision requirements of the relevant zone.

Provide a range of development opportunities across Romsey and within new sites to be developed for residential purposes.

Plan for development in new residential areas at an average lot size of 900m<sup>2</sup>.

Apply the Development Plan Overlay to new residential areas requiring consideration of open space links, road networks, landscape buffers, density and integration with existing developed areas of Romsey.



**EXISTING LOT DENSITIES**  
**Figure 15**

**Figure 14: Existing Lot Densities**

## 9. Sustainable Development

### 9.1 Ecologically Sustainable Development

Australia's National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) is based on the Brundtland definition of sustainability, which means using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes are maintained and the quality of life for present and future generations is increased. In terms of urban form, a sustainable urban form should be one that provides for the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of future generations. The Macedon Ranges Shire has shown its commitment towards ecological sustainability through its 'Natural Environment Strategy'.

How to best implement the principles of ESD in the urban form is a challenge, particularly for rural township areas. The DSE discussion paper, 'Sustainability in the Built Environment' recognises the role of Melbourne 2030 in defining how sustainability manifests in a spatial context. While the principles of sustainable urban design are now reflected in requirements such as new energy efficiency standards for dwellings, the ODP provides the opportunity to create a framework at a local level for Romsey based on the principles of ESD.

Planning for sustainable land use and development should encompass sustainability in three broad forms: economic, environmental and social sustainability.

**Economic Sustainability:** Involves protecting and enhancing assets, qualities and resources that contribute to long term economic wellbeing.

**Environmental Sustainability:** Aims to protect and enhance environmental assets, resources and qualities to ensure long term environmental well being.

**Social Sustainability:** Involves protecting and enhancing social assets, providing a safe and attractive environment and ensures the long term well being of people who live in an area.

While the principles of economic, environmental and social sustainability provide guidelines for producing a 'sustainable urban form' these principles need to be considered in more detail in the context of the unique characteristics and existing conditions of rural townships.

Often when considering these three general principles in the context of a place such as Romsey, conflicts over what is the priority issue will arise. 'Sustainability' in the built form is one policy objective that must be balanced and considered against other sometimes conflicting policy objectives such as heritage and residential character and an assessment is often required as to what outcome should prevail. Improving the sustainability of Romsey will not only benefit the local residents, but also significantly contribute to improving the well being of people and the environment in a global sense.

### 9.2 Responding to changing needs

Australian and Victorian communities are changing. The majority of households now consist of one and two persons yet most new houses still have more than three bedrooms with a two car garage. The lack of fit between housing stock and households may not serve our community well into the longer term.

Issues facing all forms of residential development include:

- the high cost of providing services and facilities, particularly water and sewerage, to cater for continued rapid expansion;
- the need for greater housing affordability;
- concerns about safety and security;
- a desire for greater social, economic and environmental sustainability; the need for more locally-based jobs;
- the ability to provide public transport more efficiently;
- maintenance of the economic base;
- access to education and community services; and
- the retention of environmental quality.

There has been considerable community discussion on the need for planning to respond to these issues and, at the same time, improve the design of urban development. The design and layout of a subdivision is a fundamental determinant of the eventual urban form which:

- sets the urban character and design of an area;
- allows, or inhibits, social interaction and therefore influences the likelihood of community formation;
- forces car dependence, or reduces it, by encouraging the non-car modes of walking, cycling and public transport;
- gives, or denies, access to facilities for all users of the urban environment; and
- provides or prevents opportunities for locally-based business and employment.

Subdivision design therefore crucially affects the performance of residential developments in achieving the objectives of the State Planning Policy Framework. Clause 56 of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme is focussed on achieving sustainable neighbourhoods. Council has also developed its own health and wellbeing guidelines.

### 9.3 Trends in neighbourhood design approaches

Neighbourhood design has been evolving over recent years. During the 1970s and 1980s, neighbourhoods typically comprised low-density housing on large lots in a curvilinear street layout with a strong street hierarchy and low levels of connectivity with culs-de-sac off local collector streets. Neighbourhoods were usually planned in cells bounded by major roads and were often walled. Most areas were almost exclusively residential.

Today there is greater emphasis on social, economic and environmental aspects. Recent neighbourhood design concepts have been given titles such as Urban Villages, Transit Oriented Design (TOD) and Traditional Neighbourhood Design (TND). In each case the underlying objective is to create residential environments that increase walkability, reduce dependency on private vehicles and are more energy and land efficient.

In response to this, the emerging planning agenda focuses on the idea of an urban structure based on walkable mixed use neighbourhoods with interconnected street patterns to facilitate movement and to disperse traffic. Daily needs may be in walking distance of most residents. With good design, more people will actively use local streets, enhancing safety. Local employment opportunities are facilitated in the town structure, providing the community with a firmer economic base and enhancing self containment of neighbourhoods and towns.

Safe, sustainable and attractive neighbourhoods are sought with a strong site-responsive identity supportive of local community. New influences also include 'Healthy Urban Planning' which encourages decision-making based on human health and well being. These models promote better community, employment and environmental sustainability than conventional planning practice.

## 9.4 Key Elements of Sustainable Communities

Approaches to urban development in the past have typically had an emphasis on land use segregation and hierarchical street systems, and design has focussed on accommodating engineering design, surveying and lot yield efficiency. The primary objective today in planning any new part of a city or town is to design a framework for a community that is sustainable, safe, vibrant and efficient. A broader and more integrated perspective is needed, with many design issues best addressed at the town and neighbourhood structure planning level.

The elements outlined below feature heavily through the Victorian Planning Provisions, though particularly the requirements of Clauses 12 and 56. Recent publications entitled '*Towards Sustainable Neighbourhoods*' (Ark Resources, 2004), '*Liveable Neighbourhoods*' (Western Australia Planning Commission, 2004), '*Safer Design Guidelines for Victoria*' (DSE&CPV) 2005 and Council's own '*Guidelines for Residential Subdivision in the MRSC: Designing in Health and Wellbeing*' (2005) and '*Healthy by Design*' (Heart Foundation, 2004) also significantly contribute to these elements.

### Element 1 – Neighbourhood Linkages

Whether new subdivisions occur at the edge of existing neighbourhoods or townships or as infill within a town centre, the manner in which new subdivisions are connected into existing neighbourhoods and activity centres is a key issue in determining social interaction.

#### Objectives

- To develop an interconnected street network that specifically aims to attract a high level of use by pedestrians, cyclists and the less-abled and reduce car dependency.
- To achieve a balance of social infrastructure (childcare, schools, workplaces, shops and government services) between existing and new neighbourhoods that is accessible by public transport or walking.
- To establish a movement network which provides convenient linkages to activity centres and local facilities both within and between neighbourhoods.
- To maximise access to public transport services, particularly those which link to nearby employment sources.

### Element 2 – Well connected streets

A legible street network with attractive frontages encourages people to be out and about. Having more people on streets contributes to more active, socially resilient and lively communities where people meet and interact. Grid street design integrates people with surrounding streets, supports convenient foot or bike travel, and eases traffic by providing drivers with alternate routes. Disconnected streets mean residents need a car for the simplest trip generating poor resource use.

## Objectives

- To construct well-connected streets that foster safety, vitality, ease of use, and better solar access.
- To reduce the number of car trips.
- To distribute traffic evenly throughout the neighbourhood.
- To create streets that allow for easier navigation and better orientation.
- To achieve high levels of pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular safety and amenity.
- To integrate public transport facilities (such as bus parking spaces) into street design to cater for future needs a service options.

## Element 3 - Pedestrians & cycling

A well-planned network of walking and cycling routes allows people to travel safely and with ease, whether on foot, bike or other wheeled vehicles. The best walking and cycling routes include a well-connected network of footpaths, shared paths for pedestrians and cyclists, off-road cycle paths, on-road cycle lanes and paths for recreation and leisure. These facilities attract further users and improve surveillance to contribute to the safety of neighbourhoods.

## Objectives

- To provide a safe, convenient and legible movement network for pedestrians and cyclists, principally along the street network; to provide excellent accessibility between residences and safe and efficient access to points of attraction within and beyond the neighbourhood.
- To design street networks to optimise the walkable access to centres, schools, public transport stops, and other destinations.
- To provide pedestrian paths through parks for recreation purposes wherever possible.
- To provide bicycle parking facilities.

## Element 4 – Integrating Public Open Space

Easily accessible parks and public open spaces provide places for people to walk and cycle to, in and around. Parks and open spaces provide active recreation, play and social opportunities for children and youth and offer pleasant spaces for older adults to walk to and gather. Parks and open spaces have the potential to attract a wide range of residents and visitors to an area.

## Objectives

- To ensure that public open space of appropriate quality and quantity is provided in a timely manner to contribute towards the recreational and social needs of the community in convenient locations.
- To ensure that safety and surveillance of public parkland is delivered through appropriate structuring and design.
- To ensure that public parkland is integrated into the urban structure to produce both land use efficiency and long-term sustainability.

- To locate, preserve and integrate natural features into public open space.

## Element 5 – Generating a Sense of Place

Sense of Place is derived from: past and present experiences; and the perception of existing residents and what they say about themselves and their township. Developing a sense of place is important because it helps people identify with their region and with each other, creating vital diverse towns, and encourages people to stay.

### Objectives

- To identify and document the unique sense of place of the existing township and surrounds.
- To integrate urban design with and enhance the sense of place of the existing township.
- To reflect urban form, township, neighbourhood and site character in design and development.
- To protect landscape character and the local distinctiveness of Romsey.
- To retain important heritage buildings and places.

## Element 6 – Lot Sizes, Housing Diversity & Density

Lot sizes should be provided to meet the projected requirements of people with different housing needs, and to provide for housing diversity and choice. Lots should be designed to have the appropriate area and dimensions to enable the siting and construction of a dwelling and associated outbuildings, the provision of private open space, and convenient vehicle access and parking.

### Objectives

To provide a range of residential lot sizes to suit the variety of dwelling and household types required with area and dimensions that meet user requirements.

- To produce lot layouts that take account of site constraints, but wherever possible optimise orientation to suit energy efficient housing.
- To arrange lots to front streets and parklands such that development enhances personal safety, traffic safety, property safety and security; and contributes to streetscape and park quality.
- To facilitate increased densities in and around town and neighbourhood centres and public transport stops, and adjacent to higher amenity areas such as parks.
- To provide lots in appropriate locations which are suited to business development to reduce travel and provide jobs.

## Element 7 – Urban Water Management

In the past, design for stormwater management has been focused on the collection and channelled removal of stormwater with little opportunity to address the removal of pollutants or reuse it. There is now recognition of the importance of water as a resource and managing the quantity and quality of stormwater prior to it reaching a receiving water body. This is necessary to ensure that run-off does not cause a deterioration of these water bodies and associated environments, and to reduce the amount of water we use.

## Objectives

- To encourage best practice in the use and management of land and water resources, reduce reliance on potable water and improve 'at source' protection of water quality.
- To encourage water conservation and reduce consumption of potable (mains) water by maximising the retention, detention and re-use of stormwater.
- To protect the built environment from flooding, inundation and stormwater damage.
- To provide an urban water management system to deliver appropriate water quality and quantity outcomes.
- Encourage adoption of water sensitive urban design in new estates as well as established areas where feasible.

## Element 8 – Local Activity Centres & Employment

Destinations such as food stores, schools, chemists, neighbourhood hubs, senior citizens centres and cafes provide local focal points for people to walk or cycle to within their neighbourhood. Local activity centres support mixed use, walkable neighbourhoods and reduce dependence on the car for local short journeys. These destinations also naturally attract a range of people of all ages into the community.

## Objectives

- To ensure that new areas of predominantly residential development are provided with sufficient and appropriately located land for local commercial and service needs, where market demand allows.
- To facilitate local activity centres that are structured as mixed use centres in a predominantly 'main street' based format and are detailed to provide a high quality public realm supportive of public transport, walking and cycling in addition to good car and service vehicle access.
- To provide adequate areas for employment in locations that are appropriate in terms of heavy vehicle access, client exposure, and are compatible with surrounding uses.
- To ensure that an appropriate amount and variety of medium density housing is provided within and around activity centres.

## 10. Land Supply and Demand Assessment

A requirement of the project is to provide a preliminary appraisal of the land demand and supply requirements for Romsey. The planning period, from a land supply perspective, is from 2006 (the year of the last census, providing a statistical reference point) through to 2021. This gives a 15 year land supply as required by State planning policy.

### 10.1 Residential Land

#### 10.1.1. Existing residential land supply

An assessment of existing residential land conducted in September 2008 shows that there is a limited supply of vacant Residential 1 Zone land. Vacant land zoned Residential 1 in Romsey is summarised in Table 6, which also provides an assessment of lots currently approved in residential subdivisions, but not yet developed.

	No. of lots
Vacant residential lots	104
Approved lots	75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>179</b>

Table 6: Available Residential 1 Zoned land

There are approximately 179 vacant existing or undeveloped approved lots that must be taken into consideration when forecasting future land requirements. It should be noted that there may be time lags that mean that some of the land identified is now already developed. However these issues are not significant because the planning period dates back to 2006, when the majority of sites, if not more, would have been vacant.

Given the large lot sizes that are evident throughout the majority of the existing residential area there is land which may be considered to be under-utilised and therefore suitable for future infill development opportunities. However, local residents have stressed the importance of the semi-rural character and the open nature of these existing residential areas. Consequently, the ODP needs to balance these desires against the efficient use of the land.

The ODP seeks to promote a planning approach that protects the character of the town. To this end the ODP does not envisage that a large proportion of the town will be subject to redevelopment or wholesale infill, but is premised on the basis that the majority of medium density development will be located within easy walking distance (200-300m) of the town core. The balance of new dwellings are planned to be provided in new growth areas identified by the ODP.

This approach seeks to maximise the efficiency of redevelopment of large lots in close proximity to town services and facilities. This strategy will also allow available capacity in water, sewer drainage and road infrastructure to be utilised and contain the extent of areas where infrastructure upgrading is required.

### 10.1.2. Demand for residential land

Forecasting future residential demand is a challenging task as there are several national, state and local factors that will influence residential development in the future. The number of additional dwellings required in future years can be determined by population increases and household formation rates (number of persons per household). With respect to household formation, the long-term trend is for a smaller number of occupants per household.

As described in Section 7, the Council's Social Planning Unit has recently provided revised population projections. These projections are relied on for the purpose of the dwelling demand analysis. The methodology behind the MRSC projections is much more sophisticated than a simple projection of a continual 2.7% growth rate into the future (as contained in the October 2008 draft ODP).

Based on the MRSC Social Planning projections:

- There will be an increase in the population of Romsey from 3,457 people in 2006 to 5,095 people in 2021 and 6,155 in 2031.
- The average household size in Romsey is projected to decrease, dropping from an average of 3.07 people in 2006 to 2.92 people per household in 2021 and 2.85 in 2031.

As illustrated in the table below, these factors result in the need for approximately 647 additional dwellings in Romsey by 2021.

As discussed in section 8.7, planning should aim for at least 15% of new housing stock to be medium density dwellings - up from the current inadequate provision of only 4% of housing. This would provide choice and help satisfy the estimated increase in single person households, especially those that are entering old age.

Year	Population (Cumulative)	Average household size	Total households	Total dwellings	Additional dwellings required (Cumulative)
2006	3,527	3.0	1,149	1,244	Nil
2011	4,056	3.04	1,336	1,447	203
2016	4,575	2.97	1,541	1,669	425
2021	5,095	2.92	1,746	1,891	647
2026	5,621	2.88	1,951	2,113	869
2031	6,155	2.85	2,156	2,335	1,091

Source: Macedon Ranges Shire Council Social Planning Unit projections, February 2009. Dwelling figures are an extrapolation from projected number of households by MRSC Strategic Planning.

**Table 7: Number of dwellings required**

#### Future residential land supply

To determine the future land needs Table 8 outlines the distribution of medium density development and development of detached dwellings that is expected to 2031.

	Population	Additional Dwellings required (cumulative)	Assumed no. of medium density units <sup>1</sup>	Assumed no. of detached dwellings	Existing lot takeup	Net lot requirements for detached dwellings	Future Land Needs <sup>2</sup>		Total greenfield land demand (cumulative ha, rounded)
							Medium density	Detached dwelling	
2006	3457*	Nil	N/A	N/A			N/A	N/A	
2011	4,056	203	30	173	112	61	0.3	7.32	8
2016	4,575	425	64	361	152	209	0.64	25.08	26
2021	5,095	647	97	550	152	398	0.97	47.76	49
2026	5,621	869	130	739	152	587	1.3	70.44	72
2031	6,155	1,091	164	927	152	775	1.64	93	95

**Table 8: Future land needs assessment**

\* ABS Census figures

- 1 Council aims to increase the % of medium density housing stock to 15% of all new housing stock by 2031. This proportion accords with the current rate of medium density provision throughout the State.
- 2 Future land needs assume that 80% of medium density dwellings locate within existing town boundaries and the remaining 20% are provided at a rate of 20 dwellings per hectare of raw greenfield land. It assumes detached dwellings are provided at 1 dwelling per 1,200m<sup>2</sup> of gross land area.

From Table 6 there are currently 179 vacant and approved lots that need to be considered in the future residential land needs. For the purpose of the analysis below, it is assumed that 80% of the approved lots and 50% of the vacant lots (a total of 112) will be developed in the 2006-2011 period; a further 40 lots are developed in the 2011-2016 period and the remaining lots are not developed due to constraints.

In terms of accommodating expected growth, approximately 49 ha of land is required to meet the future residential land needs of Romsey to 2021. This is a raw land calculation based on residential lot sizes of 900 sqm for detached dwellings and 375 sqm for medium density units. These densities seek to support reasonably compact and walkable neighbourhoods and the efficient provision of infrastructure and use of land.

As discussed above, there is also an expectation that the majority of medium density land needs will be taken up in close proximity to the town centre as infill development opportunities. Thus, limited medium density development is expected to occur in the new growth areas.

To meet Romsey's expected population growth to 2031 an additional 46 ha of land is likely to be required.

The ODP provides for residential land demand to 2021, which will therefore provide 10-15 years supply as required by State policy. Future planning processes for Romsey considering the period beyond 2021 will need to be consistent with the Shire's Settlement Strategy.

Ongoing review and monitoring of the ODP population and growth forecasts will ensure that adequate supply is maintained should development exceed projected growth scenarios.

## Location Principles

Relevant principles for identifying and selecting suitable land for residential development include:

- Land that is capable of being provided with all services (power, gas, water, sewer).
- Land that does not prejudice agricultural productivity or natural resource values associated with good quality agricultural soil and other finite resources.
- Maintenance of a clear separation and individual distinction between the Romsey and Lancefield townships.
- Recognition of the need to maintain an appropriate buffer to industrial development and the Water Recycling Plant.
- Protection of the natural environment, significant landscapes and prevailing township character.
- Promotion of healthy lifestyles, affordable and diverse housing, and safe communities.
- The objectives and standards of ResCode contained in Clause 54, 55 and 56 of the Planning Scheme.

## Location Options

Land is available on all boundaries of the existing township area. All areas available for substantial growth are a similar distance from the town centre.

### *Land to the west*

To the west of Romsey the land is generally fractured into small lots. The undulating terrain is also more challenging to service and the amount of earthworks required and possibly the visual amenity impacts would be more significant than if flatter areas of the town were developed.

### *Land to the east*

Development to the east would provide desirable access to the school and recreation precinct but would need to be carefully planned and buffered to minimise the impact of the wastewater treatment plant.

Much of the land to the south of the Romsey-Wallan Road is generally suitable for development, but not all can be serviced by gravity sewer and some areas are likely to be prone to flooding. Further north, Tickawarra Road forms a boundary to the town and has landscape qualities. Areas adjacent to Tickawarra Road cannot be served by a gravity sewer and would be expensive to service with wastewater.

### *Land to the north*

Development north of Hutchinsons Lane, beyond the current northern edge of the town, has been previously criticised for its impact on agricultural soils, existing rural activities, landscape values and encroachment into the rural corridor between Lancefield and Romsey. Hutchinsons Lane forms a defined boundary between urban and rural land.

The continued use of this land for grazing and other farming is considered increasingly important. The selection of this area for urban purposes also needs to be tempered with the implications such development would have on the highly valued rural landscape. Through successive planning projects the community has highlighted the desire for a clear separation between Romsey and Lancefield. This policy position manifests itself in several key areas in the Local Planning Policy Framework.

### *Land to the south*

Land to the south of the existing developed area is the preferred location for growth. It is partly within the existing township boundary as shown on the Romsey Structure Plan 2000. The land to the south west is also shown in the Romsey Strategy Plan 1992 for urban expansion.

Western Water has advised that land immediately adjoining the existing residential area can utilise gravity sewer. The land is held in larger parcels allowing better co-ordination of development than elsewhere, has good access to the road network and potentially public transport utilising Melbourne-Lancefield Road. Walkability is possible, given the terrain, if sensible pedestrian links are provided.

### **Future growth**

The long term future of Romsey, post 2021, will need to be considered by the Settlement Strategy for the Shire.

If the Settlement Strategy determines that further urban expansion should be provided for in Romsey after 2021, a number of options are available. In likely order of preference, they are:

1. Continued southern expansion to the limit of the gravity sewer potential in the south. This area is flat and easy to service and will be relatively well positioned between the town and the industrial and commercial area further south.
2. The area east of Tickawarra Road and north of Romsey-Wallan Road would be the closest to the town centre, still a potentially walkable distance given the flat topography of the Romsey-Wallan Road. It would be very well positioned for access to Romsey Park and the primary school. However the ownership is partly fragmented and the area cannot be serviced by gravity sewer. This means that a pump station would need to be constructed which would have initial and ongoing economic and environmental costs.
3. Land to the north could be developed utilising a gravity sewer system. However suggestions of growth to the north have met community opposition in the past, would have landscape impacts and potential effects on use of quality soils.
4. To the east, landholdings are fragmented. The large landholding north of Barry Street is undulating and while direct access to the existing urban area can be gained through Shaw Drive, this does not provide good access to the town centre as unfortunately it does not have direct access itself. This area is generally already zoned and utilised for Rural Living and it may be appropriate to consolidate rural living in this area in the future, if public access to Five Mile Creek can be secured.

Subject to consideration through the Settlement Strategy and the subsequent Rural Living Strategy, it would be important to protect at least the first two options from rural residential encroachment until a future planning process determines what options to pursue.

## 10.2 Industrial Land

### 10.2.1. Supply of Industrial Land

There is a limited supply of industrial land in Romsey, reflecting Romsey's rapid growth from a small population base.

There are currently approximately 13.3 hectares of land zoned for industrial purposes, located in two areas:

- A small industrial estate in Mitchell Court close to town centre of Romsey; and
- A small industrial subdivision in Portingales Road, adjacent to the wastewater treatment plant.

The following plan provides an indication of industrial land supply. It should be noted that this may overstate the level of vacant industrial land. For the purposes of the ODP it has been assumed that there is no vacant land currently available and all additional demand will need to be accommodated in new or expanded industrial areas.



**Figure 15: Industrial Land Supply**

Source: DPCD Industrial Land Audit 2008 – Macedon Ranges/Romsey

### 10.2.2. Demand for Industrial Land

Urban Enterprise have prepared a Romsey Commercial Land Use Study November 2009. This section of the ODP is generally based on their analysis.

There have been a total of 20 lots approved for industrial development in Romsey in the past three years. The largest of these is an industrial subdivision and development of 15 factories in Mitchell Court. The building approvals data highlights continued industrial land consumption, even though land supply is constrained. This indicates that there is likely to be continued demand for industrial land in Romsey if new development opportunities were provided.

Real estate agents have reported that they have experienced a consistently high demand for industrial land. Some businesses have been in need of appropriate industrial zoned land for a number of years, but have been unable to find a ready supply in Romsey. Most demand has originated from trade businesses and large format retailers such as garden supply businesses. These uses require an area with good access and visibility.

A phone survey of a small number of industrial businesses in Romsey was undertaken to determine the demand generated by existing businesses. Most businesses had chosen to operate out of Romsey as a base of operations due to existing ties with the area. Businesses wanted a location that was not too far from home but was also in relatively close proximity to Melbourne. The majority of businesses responding to the phone survey had indicated that they plan to expand or relocate operations some time in the future.

In order to encourage local job containment of 45%, 76,600 m<sup>2</sup> of industrial floorspace is required in Romsey. This amounts to around 19.1 hectares of industrial land, taking into account parking, circulation and landscaping. Romsey currently provides 13.3 hectares, which means that an additional 5.8 hectares is required to meet local job containment targets based on 2006 data.

The population of working age Romsey and surrounds residents (ages 15-65), is projected to increase by 36% by 2021. This creates further demand for 6.9 hectares of industrial land between 2006-2021.

Based on existing levels of employment, and the unmet supply to meet job containment targets, 12.7 hectares of new industrial land supply is therefore required to 2021.

A contingency multiplier of 1.5 is required when planning for industrial land to allow for the following:

- Land where the existing use does not change over the planning timeframe for the study, due to owners wishing to maintain its existing use;
- In case of any unforeseen increases in demand, additional land is provided above that identified to ensure market failure does not occur.

Taking into account the contingency multiplier of 1.5, 19 hectares of land is required to support future industrial demand and job containment targets.

In addition, 2 hectares of land is required for large format retail and highway service retail not otherwise accounted for in the analysis of commercial demand.

It is therefore proposed to provide 14 hectares of Industrial 1 Zone and 7 hectares of Business 4 Zone land to meet the demand for industrial and 'other' land uses.

### 10.2.3. Industrial Location

Previous Drafts of the Romsey ODP planned for industry to the east of the town. The April 2009 draft of the ODP proposed to provide:

- A wholesale precinct at the eastern edge of the town on the south side of Barry Street, supporting 6 hectares of Business 4 Zone land and another 6 hectares of Industrial 1 Zone land; and
- An industrial park (Industrial 1 Zone) adjacent to the existing Industrial 3 Zone, on the other side of Portingales Lane.

However, this proposal generated significant community concern. In addition, traffic modelling suggests that this scenario would result in significant additional traffic through the town, especially on Barry Street to the east of Melbourne-Lancefield Road, compared to industrial development to the south of the town. The Urban Enterprise report notes:

*“Furthermore the land to the south of town has a number of suitable attributes for industrial activity, these include:*

- *The land is level which will reduce construction costs;*
- *The land is under single ownership, negating the need to consolidate land parcels for development;*
- *Access can be made either directly from Melbourne-Lancefield Road or via Greens Lane;*
- *The land has exposure to the main arterial into Romsey (Melbourne-Lancefield Road).”*

Urban Enterprise’s recommended configuration of industrial development is illustrated below:



**Figure 16: Proposed Industrial Land configuration**

Source: Urban Enterprise Romsey Commercial Land Use Study, November 2009

The development of the proposed industrial area and wholesale precinct should be cohesive with a coordinated approach to the provision of industrial/ business parks including high quality design attributes. Features should include adequate off street staff parking, roads suitable for heavy transport manoeuvring, consistent landscaping treatments and set backs. A range of lots sizes should be provided from a minimum of 1000m<sup>2</sup> through to 10,000m<sup>2</sup>.

In the long term, there is likely to be a need to manage the interface between the residential growth area and the industrial area.

The northern edge of the proposed industrial area sits approximately 800 metres from the current residential area; 500 metres from the southern edge of the currently proposed residential growth area; and 400 metres from the limit of the gravity sewer. Any future residential development (post 2021) should not be allowed to encroach beyond the potential extent of the gravity sewer, illustrated in the structure plan. This will ensure that the bulk of the industrial area will remain outside the buffer distances to sensitive uses, for most industrial activities.

In the long term, it is likely to be necessary for both the Business 4 and Industrial 1 areas to expand further. However, it would not be appropriate for any future northern extension to extend so far as to adjoin the future residential area.

## 10.3 Commercial Land

### 10.2.4. Supply of commercial land

Romsey contains a total area of land zoned for retail/commercial purposes of 12.2 hectares:

- The town centre in the Business 1 Zone comprises the majority of this area, generally bounded by Woodend-Wallan Road (south side), Pohlman Street (west), Five Mile Creek (north) and the rear of properties fronting Main Street (east). This area is occupied by shops, commercial premises, community facilities and remnant dwellings.
- There are two separate areas south of Woodend-Wallan Road in the Business 4 Zone. These sites are occupied by a service station and plant nursery/display businesses.

There is approximately 1.5ha of vacant land in the Romsey town centre and perhaps a further 2ha of land that contains dwellings or industrial activities, or which is substantially under-utilised.

### 10.2.5. Commercial land demand

Romsey has a small number of offices that service the local population including professional business services and health services. Whilst it is not anticipated that Romsey would attract large office based business enterprises, Romsey could play an increasing role in the provision of professional services and health and other services for the eastern part of the Shire.

The Urban Enterprise report suggests that based on existing levels of employment, and the unmet supply to meet job containment targets, 5,400m<sup>2</sup> of land for offices is required by 2021. With a contingency multiplier of 1.5, this equates to 8,100m<sup>2</sup>.

Urban Enterprise's retail model estimates the floorspace required to service the retail needs of residents and visitors to particular areas, based on the average annual retail expenditure per resident drawn from the ABS Household Expenditure Survey, and average visitor expenditure. The model estimates that the resident and visitor population of the study area would generate demand for 7,000m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace in 2009.

Taking Council population growth projections of 2.96% per annum into account, as well as standard growth in expenditure and visitation (around 1% per annum), an estimated 8,116m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace will be required by 2021.

The current retail floorspace in Romsey is approximately 5,000m<sup>2</sup>, indicating that there is an existing undersupply of retail floorspace of around 2,000m<sup>2</sup>. In the period between 2009 and 2021, a further 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace will be required in Romsey, resulting in a total demand for an extra 3,000m<sup>2</sup> by 2021. It should be noted that this estimate of floorspace is considered conservative and is based on low to medium expenditure containment rates.

This new provision would increase convenience and allow more resident expenditure to be captured in Romsey, thus reduce escape expenditure to other centres such as Sunbury. The opportunity also exists to provide a wider range of goods, particularly in the food, liquor and groceries category.

The total amount of supportable retail floorspace identified (3,000m<sup>2</sup>) would generally require a land area of approximately 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> (1ha) to allow for car parking, access, landscaping and loading.

Based on the above, with a contingency multiplier of 1.5 there is a requirement for 1.5 hectares of land for retail purposes in Romsey. Added to the office requirement for 0.8 hectares, the total need for additional commercial (Business 1 Zone) land is 2.3 hectares.

#### 10.2.6. Location Options

There is a requirement for additional Business 1 Zoned land to be provided in the centre of town to accommodate growth in retail and offices. Whilst there is vacant business 1 zoned land to the rear of the existing retail core to accommodate projected supply, this land has poor exposure to Melbourne – Lancefield Road and has seen little development or sales transactions.

Given that no land is for sale in Romsey and there has been very little evidence of commercial sales transactions within the town centre, it is proposed that additional business zoned land be rezoned to meet the projected demand.

Land to be rezoned should be located on Melbourne-Lancefield Road, consolidating the township core. Land which is occupied by the Romsey Garden World and Romsey Mowers could also be considered for rezoning from Business 4 to Business 1 to encourage town centre retail and office activities. Adequate land has been recommended to the south of town which can accommodate any businesses which would be suited to large format retail uses.

In the long term, it would be desirable for existing industrial uses and, to a lesser extent, residential dwellings, to relocate outside of the Business 1 Zone.

## 10.3 Community Infrastructure

### 10.3.1. Current infrastructure

Provision of adequate and accessible community infrastructure contributes to the health and wellbeing of local communities including greater social interaction, community connectedness and development of stronger community networks.

The current provision of community facilities and services in Romsey includes:

- Town Centre

The main street of Romsey is wide and lined with mature European trees. Service lanes with car parking spaces are located on each side of the street giving a broad, spread out feel to the town. Romsey has a Primary School, Kindergarten, and Police Station / Ambulance / State Emergency Services centre.

- Community Hub

Macedon Ranges Shire Council recently opened a Community Hub at the redeveloped former Shire offices in Main Street, that provides an extensive, modern community asset. It incorporates a variety of meeting spaces, a library, community house, play group and toy library, community drop-in room, internet access, adult education classes, community meeting spaces and health consultancy rooms.

- Recreation Centre

The Recreation Centre is located in Park Lane. It is managed by Macedon Ranges Shire Council and provides a range of facilities. These include a large indoor court with mezzanine floor and a small amount of seating, which can be used for a variety of sports such as basketball, netball, volleyball, and soccer. Four badminton courts are provided. A number of sporting clubs share the facility and run team training and competitions. Rooms are available for hire for other activities including exercise classes and child care.

- Active Recreation Facilities

Romsey Park is centrally located and in close proximity to the recreation centre. The park is a State reserve (although Council owns the buildings) and comprises a football/ cricket oval, five tennis courts, a netball court and two lawn bowl greens. The park adjoins a 12 hole golf course. The primary school located nearby has an oval. A skate park is located in the nearby Romsey Lions Park.

The Recreation Centre, Romsey Park, the Community Hub, the Primary School, a variety of Community Services and the golf course are all in close proximity to one another and thus provide Romsey with a large consolidated recreation area with scope for further development of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.

- Passive Recreation Facilities

A number of smaller recreation reserves, parks and playgrounds are scattered throughout the residential areas of Romsey. Limited on-road cycling trails exist within the town. The Romsey Lions Park, located between Main and Pohlman Streets, adjacent to Five Mile Creek, has picnic facilities and public toilets.

The location of these facilities and services is shown in Figures 13 (section 8.6).

### 10.3.2. Future Needs

Council strategies relating to future planning and development for community infrastructure are contained in:

- Macedon Ranges Health and Well Being Plan 2008 - 2012  
This provides a broad overview of the health and wellbeing aspirations and goals of Council.
- Macedon Ranges Shire Older Persons Service Needs Report
- This report identifies that by 2020, 18 nursing home places, 22 hostel places and 6 Commonwealth Aged Care Packages will be needed for the aging population. These services are expected to be able to be located within the town.
- Macedon Ranges Shire Children and Young People's Service Needs Projections 2006  
Service need projections identify that to meet the needs of children and young persons in Romsey 148 childcare places (long day care and family day care) will be needed by 2020 and 146 by 2030; 76 kindergarten places will be needed by 2020 and 75 by 2030; 611 primary school places will be required by 2020 and 592 by 2030. These figures should be considered indicative only - they have not been updated to reflect 2006 census results. The existing kindergarten, Maternal Child Health service and Community Hub should be able to meet the needs of the population for at least the next 25 years.

Approximately 459 secondary school pupils will need to be accommodated in Romsey in 2020. The current primary school site is expected to be able to accommodate any future need for a secondary school.

- Planning for Early Childhood Services in Macedon Ranges Shire 2007.  
Current Kindergarten and Maternal Child Health services and infrastructure in Romsey will meet expected needs to 2030.
- Macedon Ranges Recreation and Leisure Strategy 2006  
Overall, the town is well serviced by a range of sporting locations. The town has well located indoor and outdoor sporting facilities and passive recreation areas. There is however a shortage of soccer fields, football ovals, cricket grounds, netball courts and club rooms to meet current demand and some existing facilities require upgrading. Additionally, there is a need for indoor and outdoor youth spaces in the town – nearly one third of the population being under 18 and nearly one quarter being aged between 10 and 24 years. Council's Leisure Plan 2006 notes the town currently has:

1 AFL oval / cricket oval      1 cricket oval

1 netball court      5 tennis courts;

1 skate park      1 golf course

Multi-purpose indoor centre

In terms of future needs, there is currently an oversupply of tennis courts and an undersupply of soccer fields, AFL oval, cricket grounds and netball courts. Potential partnerships to provide some of these facilities are currently being developed.

Table 9 below identifies emerging needs for soccer and netball facilities.

	Recommended provision 1: X pop.	Current provision No.	2006	2021	2031
			No.	No.	No.
				No.	No.
<b>Football oval</b>	4500	1	0.8	1.1	1.5
<b>Cricket oval</b>	3000	1	1.2	1.7	2.2
<b>Soccer field</b>	3000	0	1.2	1.7	2.2
<b>Indoor sports court</b>	7500	1	0.5	0.7	0.9
<b>Lawn bowls rink</b>	10000	1	0.3	0.5	0.7
<b>Outdoor netball</b>	3000	1	1.2	1.7	2.2
<b>Tennis court</b>	1500	5	2.3	3.4	4.5

**Table 9: Romsey Recreation Facility Assessment**

- Macedon Ranges Open Space Strategy 1999  
Council's Open Space Strategy 1999 indicates a need to provide open space at a rate of about 3ha per 1,000 residents. This rate is exceeded in Romsey with current open space provision adequate for the expected population at 2031.
- Macedon Ranges Aquatic Strategy 2000  
This Strategy notes the desirability of an indoor pool in Romsey which could potentially be located on existing recreation land. However the economic feasibility of such a project means it is not likely to become a reality in the short to medium term.
- Macedon Ranges Engineering Requirements for Infrastructure Provision 2008  
These guidelines detail the engineering requirements associated with infrastructure construction resulting from development within the Shire. Key areas for consideration include requirements for roads and drainage, landscaping, street lighting, developer contributions to infrastructure and community infrastructure levy, and property owner contributions towards road and footpath construction in unconstructed or partially constructed road reserves.

#### **Other Identified Opportunities**

- Additional land may be provided in the new residential areas to the south of the town to provide both for a park and playground for the local community.
- The Five Mile Creek traverses the centre of Romsey from east to west. The creek presents a long term opportunity for development of shared cycling and walking trails, potentially between Glenfern Road and Tickawarra Road. Appropriate parcels of land along the creek alignment would need to be acquired, or landowner permission obtained to utilise the land to create such a link. The challenges include current land ownership, insurance considerations, and management and maintenance of spaces developed.

## 11. Summary of Key ODP Influences

The following issues, considerations and results have influenced the form of the draft ODP:

- Planning for a population of 5,095 people in the period to 2021 and 6,155 people in 2031, a decreasing household size and an ageing population. This equates to demand for about 650 new dwellings to 2021;
- Maximising the use of existing infrastructure, services and facilities to provide for growth;
- Protecting heritage assets, including the Main Street streetscape;
- Managing the scale, bulk and setbacks of new buildings, particularly within established township areas;
- Maintaining and protecting Romsey's unique features and distinct character;
- Protecting the semi-rural landscape along Melbourne-Lancefield Road, including the 'rural break' between the Lancefield township area and Romsey;
- Maintaining and enhancing the open space corridor along Five Mile Creek;
- Providing employment, industrial and commercial development opportunities for the future, to help redress the imbalance between residential land and employment opportunities in Romsey. Demand analysis suggests that approximately 21 ha of new industrial land is required to 2021. Some expansion of the town centre Business 1 Zone is also required for commercial growth. These requirements reflect an aspiration to have 45% of Romsey workers employed in the town.
- Protecting areas of remnant vegetation and mature vegetation and promoting landscaping that contributes to the character of the town;
- Providing for a greater level of medium density development – 15% of new dwellings – close to employment, facilities, transport links and services;
- Rezoning of some unsewered land to Low Density Residential, reflecting the absence of wastewater services, the likely difficulties in providing sewerage in the future, the current character of the area and its relatively poor access to the town centre.
- Planning to ensure that the built and natural environments of Romsey encourage healthy lifestyles including promotion of walking and cycling through a high degree of community connectedness; and
- Adopting current sustainable development principles.



# Part 2: Outline Development Plan

## 12. Outline Development Plan

Three plans have been prepared:

- Proposed Structure Plan
- Proposed Planning Controls & Overlays
- Proposed Zoning Plan

### Key Planning Objectives

#### Commercial Activity

- Consolidation of central Romsey as the urban area's primary commercial centre, taking advantage of existing infrastructure, services, retail and employment opportunities. Medium density housing is encouraged within 200-300 m of the primary commercial centre.
- Providing for expansion of the Business 1 Zone to the south, rezoning an area to the west of the highway incorporating an existing mix of business, community and residential uses.
- Provision for large format retail development on the Melbourne-Lancefield Road to the south of Romsey.
- Design controls need to be applied to the Business 4 Zone areas to ensure that development reflects the rural town character, does not dominate the entry to the town and is integrated into the landscape with retention and planting of vegetation.
- A heritage overlay will ensure that development in the historic town core reflects the heritage values and rural town character of the area. To promote integrated development of the broader centre, the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) will be applied to Business 1 Zone land west of Pohlman Street, in order to promote integrated development between business areas on Pohlman Street and Main Street; and appropriate management of the interface with adjoining residential properties.

#### Industrial Development

- Greenfield land to the south of Romsey, bordered by Greens Lane and the Melbourne-Lancefield Road, is proposed for future industrial land. Seven hectares of Business 4 Zone land is planned and intended to provide for highway retail, large format retail, wholesale and some service industrial activities. Fourteen hectares of Industrial 1 Zone land is intended to provide for service industrial, manufacturing, transport and storage activities.
- The development of the proposed industrial area and wholesale precinct should be cohesive with a coordinated approach to the provision of industrial/ business parks including high quality design attributes. Features should include adequate off street staff parking, roads suitable for heavy transport manoeuvring, consistent landscaping treatments and set backs. A range of lots sizes should be provided from a minimum of 1000m<sup>2</sup> through to 10,000m<sup>2</sup>.
- Landscape buffers should be provided on the Melbourne-Lancefield Road and Greens Lane frontages of the new industrial area to soften the visual impact of development.
- The industrial area at Mitchell Court needs to be managed to avoid adverse impacts on sensitive adjoining uses, including Romsey Primary School. The ODP provides for rezoning of this area from Industrial 1 to Industrial 3.

## Residential Development

- The ODP provides for approximately 650 new residential dwellings to 2021, reflecting an increase in the current population of 3,527 to 5,095. The majority of these dwellings are expected to be accommodated in 49ha<sup>18</sup> of land on the southern edge of Romsey. These allowances provide for forecast population growth.
- If current trends are permitted to continue, further land will be required in the long term – approximately 46 ha between 2021 and 2031. The Settlement Strategy will consider the long term growth of the town, but in the interim areas to the immediate south and east of the town should be protected from encroachment by rural residential development in order to safeguard the possibility of future urban expansion.
- Any future residential development (post 2021) to the south of the town should not encroach beyond the potential extent of the gravity sewer, illustrated in the structure plan. This will ensure that the bulk of the industrial area will remain outside the buffer distances to sensitive uses, for most industrial activities.
- Rezoning of the Dyer property at 2662 Main Road should allow for an appropriate practical boundary between an area of Residential 1 Zone to the north and a balance area of Rural Living to the south. The zoning schedule of the Rural Living balance may need to be changed to allow that land to be excised in accordance with subdivision requirements of the relevant zone.
- Housing choice is provided in the two new residential areas in Romsey, both on the southern perimeter of the town. It is envisaged that each area will include a range of conventional residential lot areas with larger lots along the interfaces with the existing development and the Melbourne-Lancefield Road. The average lot size is expected to be 900m<sup>2</sup>.
- Road layouts of new subdivisions should be highly interconnected, avoid cul de sacs and utilise all available opportunities to connect to the existing urban area, including existing reserves for pedestrian connectivity. Lots should not be designed to rely on direct property access to the Melbourne-Lancefield Road, unless a service road separate from the highway is provided.
- Develop a Romsey specific DPO that can be applied to residential areas in place of the current DPO1 and 9. Apply the DPO to greenfield residential areas to promote co-ordinated development between areas. Apply the DPO also to partly undeveloped areas south of Barry Street and east of Metcalf Road.
- Consider removing existing DPOs over areas that have already been fully or partially developed, in the vicinity of Murphy and Wrixon Streets; Barry Street/Couzens Lane; and on the south side of Hutchinsons Lane, west of Stuartfield Ave.
- At least 15% of new dwellings should be provided in the form of medium density housing. This will be encouraged within 200-300 m of the commercial core where access to services is of a high quality, dwellings are generally older and there are many generous sized lots suited to redevelopment. The structure plan defines the preferred area for medium density development. It is expected that the preferred area for medium density housing will be placed in a different zone to the remainder of the Romsey residential areas (or with different schedules to the zone) when new residential zones are introduced for Victoria.
- Some unsewered Residential 1 Zone land in the north-east of the town needs to be rezoned to Low Density Residential, reflecting the absence of wastewater services, the likely difficulties in providing sewerage in the future, the current character of the area and its relatively poor access to the town centre.

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<sup>18</sup> The 49 ha is a gross figure including roads, reserves etc and includes an existing area of undeveloped Residential 1 Zone land on the southern edge of the town, east of the highway.

- All new residential development should implement the sustainability principles set out in Chapter 9, in addition to these Key Planning Objectives and the requirements of the Planning Scheme.

### Cultural identity & natural character

- Implementation of heritage controls will reflect and reinforce the distinctive character of the Romsey town centre. These controls will guide new development to complement rather than compete with or replicate the existing built form. Further sites or areas will be considered for protection through the Macedon Ranges Heritage Review.
- The character of Romsey is an important issue for the community and the ODP provides a preliminary assessment of residential character and residential design guidelines. It is proposed to undertake a detailed town character study to complement and implement the ODP. Development should proceed in accordance with the design guidelines in the ODP in the interim. This approach will reduce the impact of land use change on the existing rural character of established areas, except land around the town centre where accessibility makes redevelopment and medium density housing more desirable.
- Identify native vegetation areas which require consideration for protection prior to rezoning of greenfield areas.
- Promote restoration of vegetation consistent with original ecosystem types (typically Plains Grassy Woodland).
- Enhance waterway character and quality through adoption of water sensitive urban design.

### Safety

- Residential development should be designed to address open space areas/reserves, encouraging use, safety and passive surveillance.

### Open Space

- Adequate active open space is currently provided, mainly within central Romsey. However, Five Mile Creek is identified as a long term opportunity for development of shared cycling and walking trails.
- Redevelop and expand sporting facilities in the Romsey Park and Primary School precinct, including use of recycled water where practicable.
- New public open space will be required in the new development areas. The provision and location of open space requires detailed consideration in finalisation of the ODP and preparation of Development Plans for these new areas. Additional land may be required where drainage and/or environment protection is to be facilitated.
- New open space will accommodate appropriate pedestrian and cycle paths.

### Education/Community

- Work with education providers to promote the establishment of a secondary school in Romsey, in order to promote community cohesion, local employment and more sustainable transport patterns. Provision of additional education facilities has been under review and future planning needs to recognise the additional growth foreshadowed by this plan. Planning should safeguard the potential for a future secondary school on land adjacent to the primary school.
- Support additional child care facilities where located close to the town centre or in the south of the town to recognise the future residential growth area.

## Transport and infrastructure

- Complete and implement the Romsey Movement Study.
- Apply the Development Plan Overlay to greenfield growth areas to ensure a well connected network of streets, footpaths and cycleways are provided across all areas. Provide road layouts that can accommodate public transport that would be able to stop within easy walking distance of all lots and move quickly and easily through the estate.
- Indicate the likely future need for a signalised intersection at Barry Street/Melbourne-Lancefield Road.
- Implement outcomes of the Romsey Drainage Study.
- Update flood mapping and the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay in areas potentially susceptible to flooding.
- Review Council engineering standards with a view to allowing use of swales and other water sensitive urban design techniques.
- Apply the Development Contributions Plan Overlay to new growth areas to ensure that the community is not forced to subsidise new development.



## Design guidelines

Character element	Objectives	Design responses	Avoid
<b>Siting</b>	<p>To provide space between buildings</p> <p>To ensure consistent front boundary setbacks are provided and buildings do not dominate the streetscape.</p>	<p>Buildings should be setback from side and rear boundaries by a minimum of 3 metres, unless consistent with neighbourhood character.</p> <p>Provide front setbacks consistent with neighbouring development. Where there are no neighbouring dwellings to provide a precedent, front setbacks should be a minimum 6 metres.</p>	<p>Boundary to boundary development.</p> <p>Insufficient setbacks that limit provision of landscaping and provide for the appearance of continuous built form along the streetscape.</p> <p>Carports or garages forward of the dwelling.</p>
<b>Height and building form</b>	<p>To ensure development does not dominate the streetscape.</p>	<p>Provide for predominantly low scale development</p> <p>Ensure two storey development is articulated.</p>	<p>Development higher than two storeys.</p> <p>Two storey construction close to street boundaries (distance to boundary should be equal to or greater than the height of two storey wall).</p> <p>Two storey construction close to side or rear boundaries (as defined above), adjoining neighbours open space.</p> <p>Large expanses of sheer two storey wall.</p>
<b>Materials and design detail</b>	<p>To use building materials and design details that complement the dominant streetscape, low density character and rural township setting.</p>	<p>Use materials and finishes that blend with surrounding landscaping and the prevailing built form features of the streetscape.</p>	<p>Mock heritage details such as lacework, finials, and fenestrated gabled roofs.</p> <p>Brightly coloured materials in areas of muted tones.</p>
<b>Vegetation and landscaping</b>	<p>To retain remnant native and significant exotic vegetation.</p> <p>To encourage a landscaped setting for all new developments, with a preference for native species.</p>	<p>Retain existing canopy trees.</p> <p>Protection of significant on site vegetation.</p> <p>Encourage landscaping in front setbacks and allow in the road reserve where practicable.</p> <p>Provide substantial numbers of street trees and allow natural regeneration in the road reserve where practicable.</p>	<p>Removal of canopy trees.</p> <p>Planting of any weed species.</p> <p>Small front setbacks.</p>

Character element	Objectives	Design responses	Avoid
<b>Boundary treatments</b>	To maintain the open, landscaped setting between the road and front setback areas.	Avoid front fencing or allow low, open style front fencing. Encourage vegetation as a boundary treatment.	High or solid front fencing. High or solid side fencing forward of the dwelling. Lack of vegetation in front and side setback areas
<b>Roadway treatments</b>	To retain the wide road reserves, grassed verges and open swale/table drains.	Provide wider road reserves in accordance with Council's Infrastructure Policy. Underground power services	Narrow road reserves.
<b>Subdivision design</b>	Ensure subdivision provides lots that can be developed in accordance with design principles reasonably easily. Provide street layouts that are consistent with valued character.	Provide straight roads where practicable. Provide wide lots to allow for side setbacks. Provide regular, rectangular lots where possible.	Adjoining corner lots. Irregularly shaped lots, where possible. Unnecessary curves in roading unrelated to topography. Cul de sac layouts.



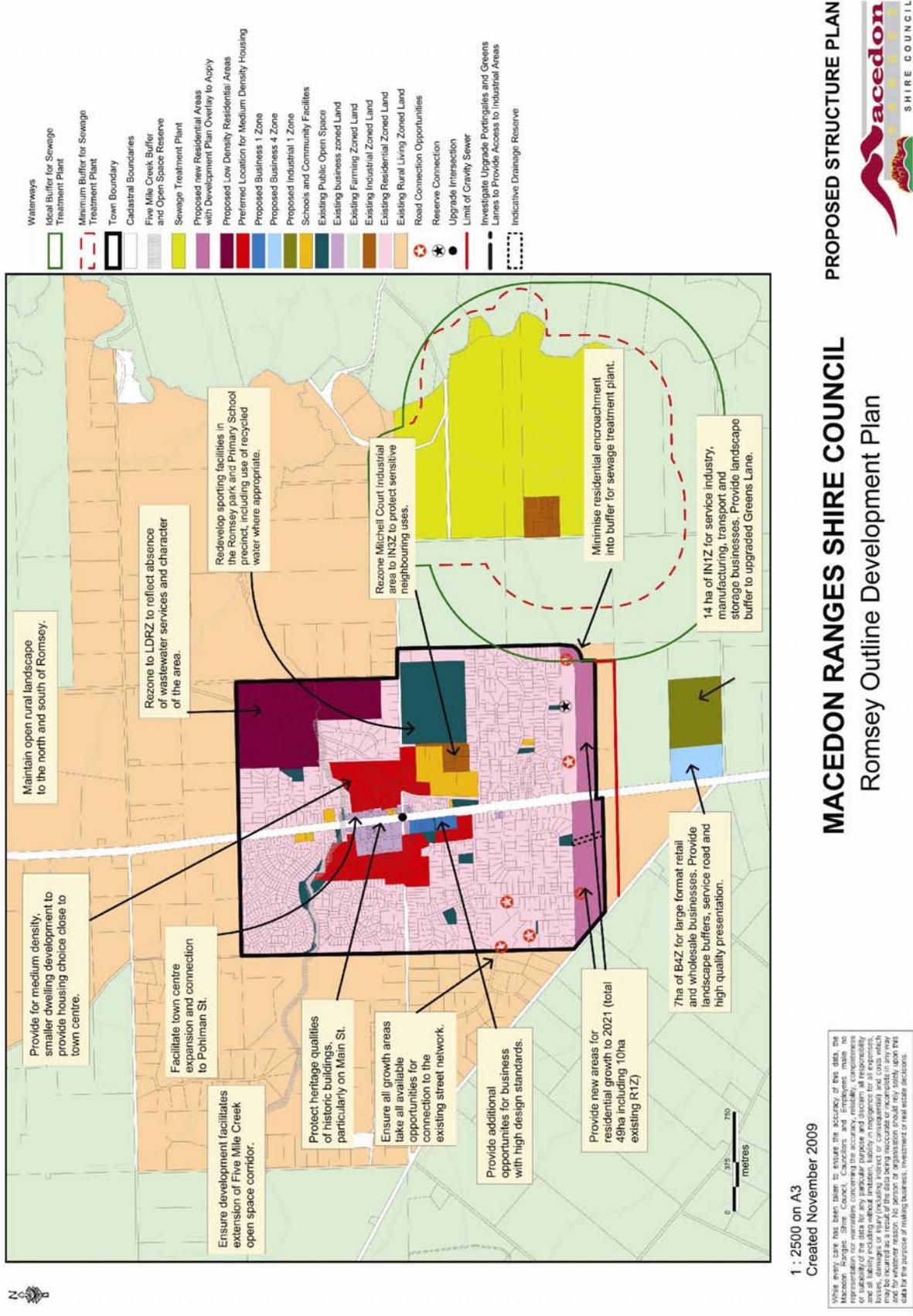


Figure 17: Proposed Structure Plan



1 : 2500 on A3  
Created November 2009

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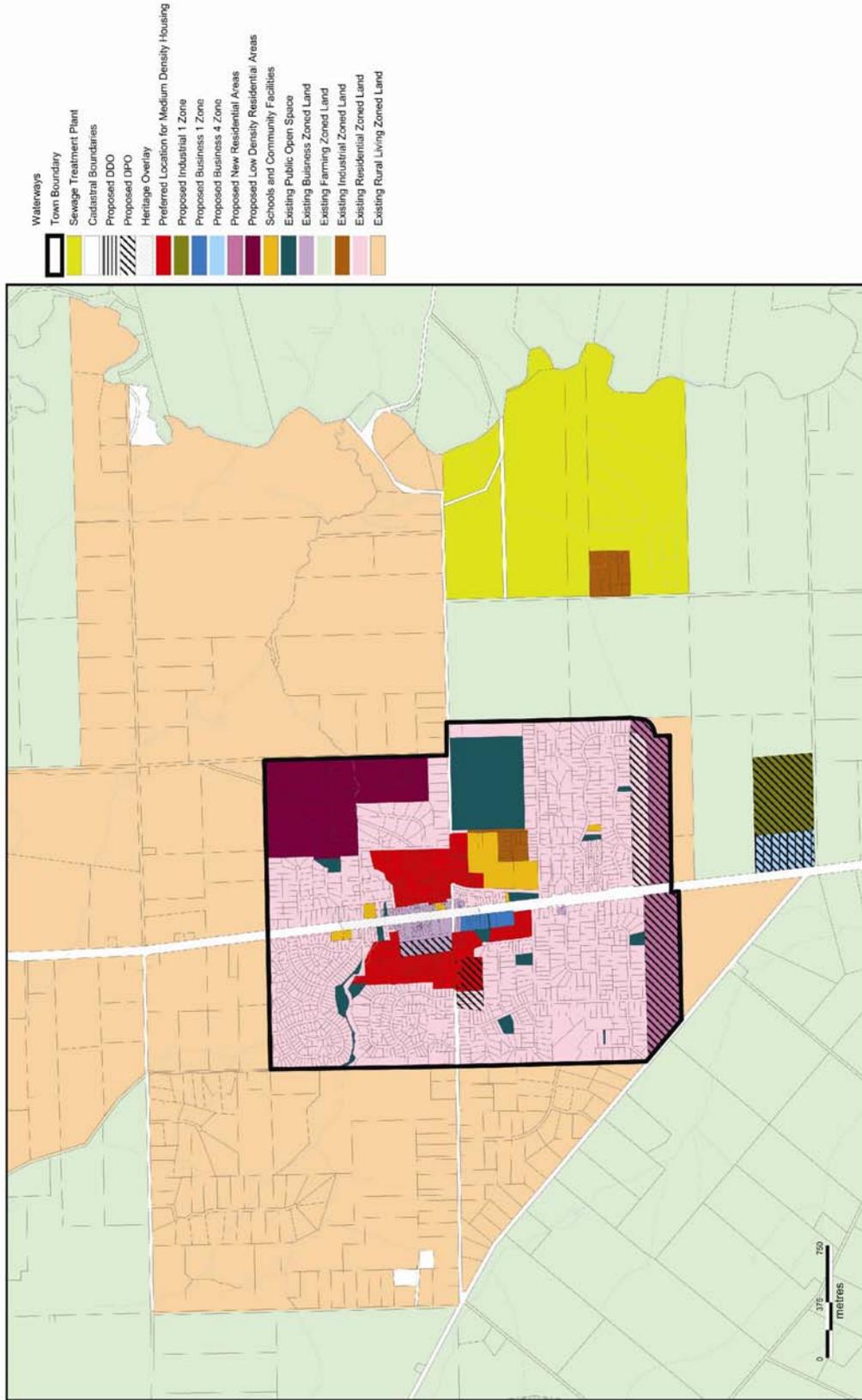


Figure 18: Proposed new overlays

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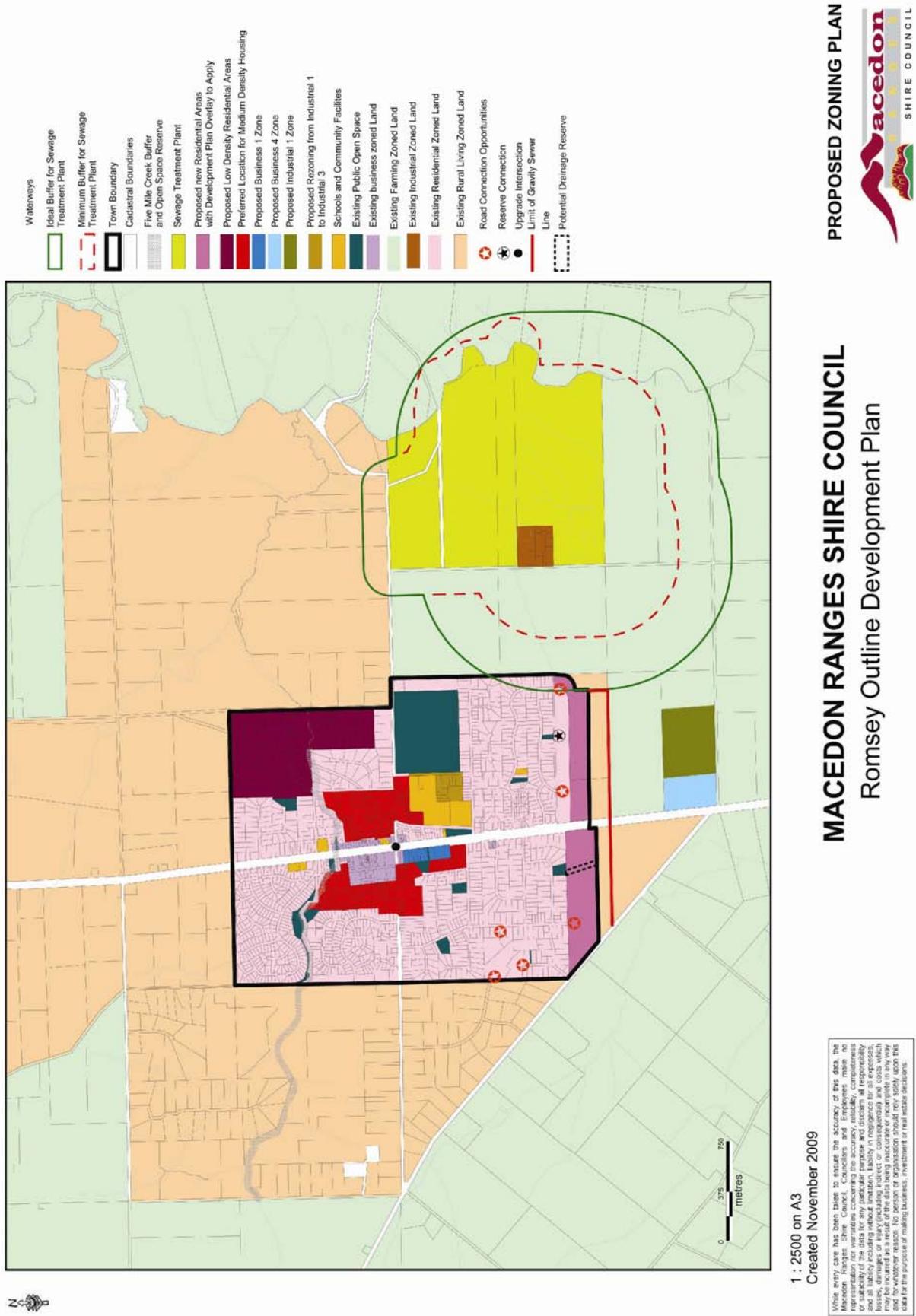


Figure 19: Proposed zoning

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## 14. Appendices

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## Consultation

The Romsey Outline Development Plan (ODP) has been under development since May 2005. There have been a range of consultative processes over this time, not all of which have been driven by the Council.

### Community Forums

The first Community Forum was held in July 2005 and attended by more than 120 people. The aim of the first session was to identify the key issues facing Romsey in regard to expected growth over the next 20 years. An exercise was undertaken to determine what features of the town were valued and what should/should not be encouraged for the future.

The second round of consultation was held in September 2005 and involved a mapping exercise for the township where participants were asked to identify locations for specific land uses, facilities and services including rural residential, large urban allotments, medium sized urban allotments, conventional allotments, factories/warehouses, offices and shops. Other uses that were also discussed included community facilities and open spaces.

The two rounds of consultation identified that Romsey has a number of key issues that will need to be addressed within the Outline Development Plan. It appears that connectivity issues for pedestrian access, limited public transport access to surrounding towns and Melbourne, heritage values, and a rural lifestyle character are significant. Romsey residents are determined to maintain its rural character and lifestyle.

To reach a broader audience, a Street display was placed in the town. Responses from the street stall held on 17 December 2005 were assessed with those from the formal exhibition period.

### Business Forum

In September 2006 a Business Forum was hosted by the Romsey Business and Tourism Association (BATA) and was attended by 76 members of the business community and other stakeholders. Notable comments from the Forum include:

*“The rural lifestyle is a positive trend in terms of actual attraction of investment to the town. However, a continuation of the trend will create too great a discrepancy between local residents and local jobs.*

*Commuters are not reinvesting in local businesses.*

*The asset is the rural lifestyle and city access. It is easy to promote the town. The development in population in Romsey will lead to a change in the rural lifestyle unless it is well controlled.*

*Blocks “of a good size” need to be maintained; no McMansions.*

*The maintenance of a rural outlook is critical by radiating development and ensuring an increasing block size away from town.*

*There needs to be an opportunity for local jobs in town. There needs to be more industrial land close to town and more commercial land in town.*

*The location with respect to the airport, Tullamarine Business Parks, the army and Ring Road will inevitably attract residents without commensurate local jobs.*

*Should be matching jobs growth to population growth. With population growth, but not job growth, there will be young people without jobs in the future.*

*There needs to be a policy and procedure in place to attract industry to town.*

*...positives are the large labour force that would enjoy opportunities to work locally instead of commuting.*

*Local land is overvalued to get an economic return from traditional (broadacre) farming.*

## First draft exhibition

An ODP was developed and then the draft document was exhibited from November 2006 to February 2007 with written submissions received. All submissions were considered by the steering committee at its meeting in March 2007 and subsequently by Council at its meeting on 8 August 2007.

Submissions were received from 38 people. Key issues raised include:

- Location of future residential land – the northern extension of the township was not supported by many submitters and alternative sites are suggested.
- The need for additional business and industrial zoned land to facilitate the growth of local employment opportunities and service; and
- The need for infrastructure improvements or protection; particularly public transport and water supply.

## Community consultation sessions October 2008

At the community consultation sessions held on 28 October 2008, the participants told Council their likes, dislikes and needs for Romsey. Comments made during the two group discussions are listed below. It should be noted that these are the individual comments recorded and are not necessarily representative of all participants.

Likes	Dislikes	Needs
Country town – Romsey is not a suburb of Melbourne Town identity Ideally located to Melbourne, Airport and rest of State and commuting distance to Melbourne and the Airport Safe – people can walk, leave doors unlocked, children can ride to school Main Street – service centre, trees and heritage buildings Five Mile Creek Central school location Compact town	Escape expenditure and associated impacts Litter Small residential lots (less than 600sqm) Main Street properties not being developed and allowing unsightly views such as to the public toilets Traffic impacts from growth and development Lack of shopping choice and quality produce available elsewhere eg. supermarkets. Adhoc subdivisions that are not	High School Improved shop opening hours Long term vision Healthcare and a hospital Maintenance of town character Sympathetic building and urban design Better street lighting Integrated and additional recreation and parkland to attract a well-located and designed industrial park commercial properties to maintain appearance of buildings and ensure

Availability of high quality education Rural town and history Main Street No large supermarkets Central retail hub Climate Sociable and friendly community Natural landscapes and setting Scale of town	sustainable and lack infrastructure such as footpaths and open space/parks	they are aesthetically pleasing Aged care planning – retirement village and appropriate zoning for such Employment to address escape spending Growth in retail – but not a Sunbury. Infrastructure for growth, particularly public transport Eco-friendly building and subdivision design.
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## Submissions on October 2008 draft ODP

Following consultation with submitters, community groups and state referral agencies a revised draft ODP was prepared. The revised draft was on public exhibition between October 2008 and January 2009. A total of 31 submissions were received.

General observations on submissions are:

- The need to provide for more business land was a reasonably consistent theme in submissions. However there are two distinct schools of thought in relation to commercial land (retail, office, hotel etc but not industrial). One group advocates for a significant expansion of commercial land, particularly along the highway, with new or extended business zones both in the town and at the southern entrance to the town. The other group argues for a consolidation of the town centre within existing business zones. To some extent these groups reflect the property interests concerned.
- There are various submissions that argue the ODP is too conservative in assessing the growth prospects of Romsey; does not provide for enough residential land; and/or assumes more medium density development will occur than is likely.
- There was a related group of submissions that argued 750m<sup>2</sup> was too low as an assumed average lot size for (non-medium density) residential development in the new growth areas.
- There was a smaller group of submissions that take the opposite perspective to the expansionary approach above and argue that Romsey should not grow further, at least for the moment. Some argue this from a character perspective, with a desire to see Romsey retain a small town feel. Others argue from an environmental and/or infrastructure perspective – suggesting that Romsey lacks features that are available elsewhere in the Shire such as freeway access, quality public transport services and a secondary school.

Ten people completed the community survey form that presented a number of propositions and asked people either to agree or disagree. There was a very high level of support (at least 9 out of the 10 respondents agreed) for some features of the ODP including:

- Town Centre - Develop Pohlman St plus infill development on Main St.
- Residential Development - Preferred areas for medium density housing around town centre.

- Local roads and traffic - Maintain rural character by designing swales for drainage.

There was also a high level of support for the following:

- Landscape character - Maintain clearly delineated edges between farm land and urban areas (80% agreed).
- Industrial Development - Provide land for industry in Portingales Ln east of the town (80% agreed).
- Landscape character - Maintain a clear separation between Romsey and Lancefield (70% agreed).

The only proposition that did not enjoy majority support was the proposal for a new Business Park south of the town, on either the east or west side of the highway. Opinions on this issue were evenly split.

Additional comments on the survey raise a range of issues. The only common theme is that residents appreciate Romsey's character as a country town and do not want that eroded.

## Submissions on April 2009 draft ODP

A revised draft ODP was prepared and open to public comment between 5 May and 9 June 2009.

There was substantial community engagement in this round of consultation, with a significant level of agitation by community members against certain aspects of the ODP. A total of 187 submissions were received, 18 of which were received late. Key issues generating submissions were:

- A Business 4 Zone that was proposed between Gordon Crescent and Reynolds Grove – with perceived issues of increased traffic, noise, air pollution, decreased property values and impacts on the character of Romsey; and
- Industrial rezoning that was proposed to the east of the town and resulting potential traffic impacts.

A total of 49 standardised form submissions opposing the B4Z were received, with two variants of the submission. A standardised form letter opposing the B4Z and supporting business and industry north of Greens Lane was submitted by five people. There were also various other submissions raising concerns with B4Z, some in conjunction with other issues.

Approximately 50 submissions were received that primarily expressed concerns with the industrial zones proposed to the east of Romsey. These included substantial numbers of submissions that:

- Proposed industry to the south as an alternative, or
- Accepted industry to the east if alternative access was provided, including a petition with six signatories (counted as one submission); or
- Expressed general opposition to industry – no alternative proposed (some with additional issues).

Lesser numbers suggested a range of alternatives, or supported industry on Portingales Lane only (not Barry Street).

A broad range of other submissions were received that either raised different issues or raised a number of issues. Many of the submissions that raised a number of issues included concerns regarding industry to the east of the town.

There was little response to the proposal to rezone unsewered land in the north-east corner of Romsey from Residential 1 to Low Density Residential. Four submissions were received, one in opposition, one in support and two that did not express a preference.

In response to submissions, the Council resolved in August 2009:

- That the proposed B4Z between Gordon Crescent and Reynolds Grove would not be pursued; and
- To relocate the proposed industrial areas from the east to the south of the town; and
- To extend the Business 1 Zone to the south in order to incorporate an existing B4Z area.

In response to this decision, the Council received a petition at its September Ordinary Meeting, signed by 956 residents, opposing the extension of the Business 1 Zone on the western side of Main Street.

# Residential Character Analysis – Case Studies

## Area 1. North-east low density quadrant

### DESCRIPTION

This area has a distinct semi-rural character with a predominance of single storey dwellings built in the late 90s till now. Dwellings have substantial setbacks and long horizontal frontages facing the road. The southern half of this area is significantly more vegetated than the northern half and Five Mile Creek separates the two areas.



### KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture primarily comprises of large ranch style dwellings constructed between the late 1990s till now.
- The area is predominantly single storey
- Building materials are predominantly brick with colourbond roofing and some use of tile.
- Given the spacious lots sizes in the area there are substantial front and side setbacks ranging from 10-25m for sides and 50-70m for front setbacks
- Front and side fencing is all open farm style fencing.
- Gardens are primarily new and establishing with a dominance of exotic species. In the southern, more established section of the area, Cypress tree boundary treatments are dominant.
- Road treatments are soft with a narrow sealed width, open swale drains that are grassed. There are no footpaths constructed in the area.
- Topography is very gently undulating with flatter areas in the southern half of the area and Five Mile Creek
- Large lots between 6,000sqm to 12,000sqm are a distinct feature of the area.
- The area is un-sewered.



### PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

The area retains its low density /semi-rural character. Buildings are never built to side boundaries and the area retains an open, spacious appearance with significant substantial front and side setbacks. Buildings maintain the pattern of street orientation that is evident in the area and low profiles are characteristic of the area.

The adjoining Five Mile Creek properties contain more native vegetation to complement the creek environs and any opportunities Council may receive to acquire land along the frontage are taken up.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring development is substantially setback from all boundaries.
- Encouraging the planting of native vegetation, particularly near Five Mile Creek.
- Enhancing the residential interface between Five Mile Creek and development.
- Ensuring fencing is open style, such as traditional farm post and wire construction.
- Providing for sealed roads and driveways with grassed verges, open swale drains and other soft engineering features.
- Rezoning the area to the Low Density Residential Zone.

### **ISSUES/THREATS**

- Introduction of solid front and rear fencing.
- Development along boundaries.
- Dominant outbuildings that maximise the street frontage.
- More intensive urban development due to a lack of reticulated sewerage.
- Suburban forms of dwelling developments that lack roof articulation

## Area 2. South-west

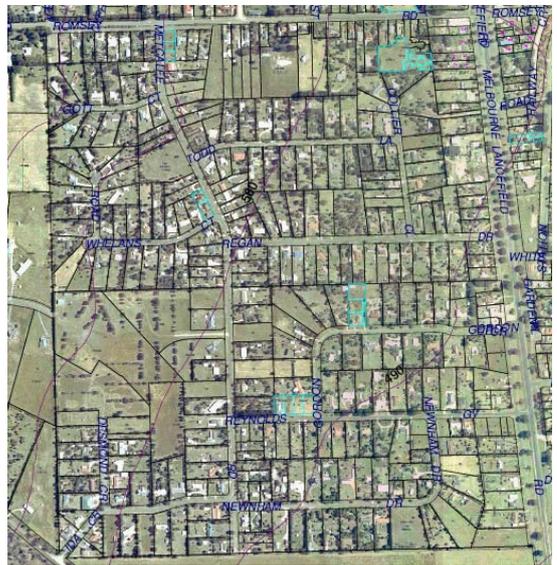
### DESCRIPTION

This area has a distinct low density character with a predominance of single storey dwellings built in the late 70s and 80s. Dwellings have generous setbacks and long horizontal frontages facing the road. Road reserves and lot frontages blend into one with informal primarily native and some exotic trees and shrubs blurring the distinction between public and private space.



### KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture primarily comprises of late 1970s to 80s dwellings, predominantly low lying forms with hipped roofs.
- The area is predominantly single storey with a limited number of two storey dwellings.
- Building materials are predominantly brick with colourbond roofing and some use of tile.
- Setbacks are generous ( generally 6 – 20 m front and 4-8m side)
- Front and side fencing is primarily either non-existent or low and open. There are only a small number of examples of solid side fencing.
- Gardens are mostly native, with some exotic species and there is limited delineation between the private and public realm.
- Road treatments are soft with a narrow sealed road pavement, wide road reserves, open swale drains that are grassed, unsealed driveways. There are no footpaths constructed in the area.
- Topography is relatively flat to the south and very softly undulating to the north-west.



### PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

The area retains its low density character. Buildings are never built to side boundaries and the area retains an open, spacious appearance with significant substantial front setbacks. Buildings maintain the pattern of street orientation that is evident in the area and low profiles are characteristic of the area.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring development is substantially setback from all boundaries.
- Ensuring fencing is open style, such as traditional farm post and wire construction on site frontages.
- Providing for wide road reserves and driveways with grassed verges, open swale drains and roll over kerbs.

## **ISSUES/THREATS**

- Introduction of high and solid front and side fencing.
- No side setbacks and continuous building form.
- Large, bulky dwellings that dominate the streetscape and provide little landscaping.
- Dominance of hard surfaces particularly at the front of dwellings.